

CAI
L 21
- 1960
T 61



3 1761 11767236 0



Trends in the
**AGRICULTURAL
LABOUR FORCE**
in Canada

ECONOMICS AND RESEARCH BRANCH
DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR
OTTAWA



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761117672360>

TRENDS IN THE AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE IN CANADA

From 1921 To 1959



**Economics and Research Branch
Department of Labour, Ottawa,
August 1960.**

Previous Farm Labour Bulletins published by the Department of Labour:

The Farmer's Son, 1953

Farm Safety And Workmen's Compensation, 1954

Working And Living Conditions In Agriculture, 1955

Price 45 cents Cat. No. L42-962

Available from the Queen's Printer

Ottawa, Canada

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword.....	(i)
List of Tables	(iv)
Charts	(v)
Introduction	1
CHAPTER –	
I – The Agricultural Labour Force	3
In Relation to Trends in Other Industries	3
From 1921 to 1945	4
From 1946 to 1958	7
In 1959	12
Recent Immigration as a Source of Farm Labour	13
II – Characteristics Of The Agricultural Labour Force	15
Male and Female Farm Labour	15
Participation Rates	17
Age Distribution of Farm Operators and Other Workers	19
Marital Status	23
Employment Status.....	25
III – Seasonality Of Employment In Agriculture	29
The Pattern of Seasonal Variation.....	29
Seasonal Employment Among Women and Young Workers.....	31
Seasonality and Hours of Work	32
Seasonality In Relation to Other Industries.....	34
Placement of Seasonal and Other Farm Workers	35
IV – Conditions Of Employment In Agriculture	37
Labour Legislation	37
Hours of Work	39
Wages	39
V – Trends And Characteristics Of The Farm Population	43
Farm Population and the Size of Farm Families	43
Farm Residents with Off-Farm Jobs	45
Standards of Education in Farm Areas.....	46
VI – Other Trends In The Agricultural Industry	49
Size of Farms.....	49
Productivity	51
Income	52
VII – Conclusions	55
APPENDIX –	
A. Note on the Comparability of 1951 Census and Labour Force Survey Data Concerning the Labour Force in Agriculture	59
B. Tables A – H	61
INDEX –	69

FOREWORD

In the past few years public attention has been increasingly focussed on the decline in the Canadian farm population as well as in the number of farms and farm operators. In the press and on radio and television, agricultural organizations, agricultural professionals and farmers have shared discussions on the exodus of farm people to urban areas and non-farm jobs. The central theme of many discussions is the changing relationship of manpower and other production resources in agriculture, and the effect of these changes on farm enterprises and on farm and urban communities.

It is hoped that the following study of trends in the agricultural labour force will contribute to the interest in this general area, and particularly to the interest in manpower resources in agriculture.

In the study, an attempt has been made to gather in one place data on farm employment, the characteristics of farm labour, wages and working conditions in agriculture, and the implications of other social and economic factors to the farm labour force.

Acknowledgment is made to the Special Surveys Division of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics for the valuable contribution of special tabulations. Assistance and advice was also given by others in the Bureau, the National Employment Service and the Federal Departments of Agriculture, Citizenship and Immigration.

The study was prepared in the Employment and Labour Market Division of the Economics and Research Branch by Mr. D.R. Buchanan under the direction of Dr. Gil Schonning.

W.R. Dymond,
Director,
Economics and Research Branch,
Department of Labour, Ottawa.

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Page
1 - Trends in the Number of Persons 14 Years of Age and Over Occupied in Agriculture, Both Sexes, Canada and Regions, 1921-41	5
2 - Regional Trends in the Canadian Agricultural Labour Force, Persons with Jobs, Both Sexes, Annual Averages, 1946-59	9
3 - Changes in the Agricultural, Non-Agricultural and Total Labour Force, Both Sexes, Canada and Regions, 1946-58	10
4 - Percentage Distribution of the Labour Force in Agriculture by Sex, Annual Averages, Canada, 1946-58	15
5 - Percentage Distribution of the Canadian Farm Population Aged 14 and Over, by Region and Sex, 1956	17
6 - Agricultural Labour Force Participation Rates by Age and Sex, Canada, 1951 and 1956	18
7 - Number of Farm Operators and Age Distribution by Region, Canada, 1921-51	20
8 - The Agricultural Labour Force by Age and Sex, Canada, 1951-58	21
9 - Age Distribution of Males in the Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Labour Force, Canada, Annual Averages, 1958	22
10 - Marital Status of Males 14 Years of Age and Over Occupied in Agriculture, Canada, 1931-51	25
11 - Employment Status of Workers in Agriculture, Both Sexes, Canada, Annual Averages, 1946-58	27
12 - Self-Employed, Unpaid Family and Total Workers in Agriculture, Both Sexes, by Region, Annual Averages, 1946 and 1958	28
13 - Males Employed in Agriculture by Hours Worked in Peak and Trough Months, Canada, Six-Year Averages, 1953-58	34
14 - Wages of Male Farm Help Compared with Those of Unskilled Labourers in Selected Occupations, by Provinces, 1958	41
15 - Wages of Male Farm Help Compared with Those of Selected Logging Occupations in New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario, 1958....	42
16 - Changes in the Canadian Farm Population, by Regions, 1931-56.....	44
17 - Percentage Distribution of Canadian Farm Families by Number of Persons per Family and by Regions, 1956	45
18 - Rural-Farm, Rural Non-Farm and Urban Population 14 Years of Age and Over, with Nine Years or More of Schooling, Both Sexes, Canada, 1951.....	47

APPENDIX

A - Persons 14 Years of Age and Over with Jobs in the Labour Force, by Industry, Both Sexes, Canada, 1948 and 1958.....	61
B - Estimates of the Canadian Civilian Labour Force, Total all Industries and Agriculture, By Sex, at June 1 dates, 1931-58.....	62
C - Annual Percentage Changes in the Agricultural Labour Force, Persons with Jobs, Both Sexes, Canada and Regions, 1946-58	63

Table No.	Page
D – Post-War Immigration to Canada Showing Those Who Stated Their Intended Occupation as Farming, Both Sexes, 1946-58	64
E – Seasonal Indexes for Persons with Jobs in Agriculture, Both Sexes, Canada, Quebec, Ontario and Prairie Provinces, 1953-58	65
F – Percentage Distribution of Males with Jobs in Agriculture, by Hours Worked per Week, Averages for Four Quarters, Canada, 1946-58	66
G – Indexes of Agricultural Labour Productivity, Canada, 1946-55	67
H – Twelve-Year Comparison of Agricultural Labour Force and Net Farm Real Income per Person in the Labour Force, Canada and Regions, 1946-57.....	68

CHARTS

Chart No.	
1 – The Canadian Labour Force and Persons with Jobs in Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Industries, Both Sexes, at June 1 or nearest dates, 1931-58	6
2 – Regional Trends in the Canadian Agricultural Labour Force, Persons with Jobs, Both Sexes, 1946-58	8
3 – Percentage Distribution of the Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Labour Force by Age Group and Sex, 1958	24
4 – Trends in Different Types of Workers in Agriculture, Both Sexes, Canada, 1946-58	26
5 – Seasonal Variation of Agricultural Employment in Canada, Prairie Provinces, Ontario and Quebec, 1953-58	30
6 – Seasonal Pattern of Labour Force in Agriculture, by Sex and Age Group, Canada, 1958	33

FIGURE 1

Map of Canada and the Five Labour Force Regions, Showing the Decline of the Agricultural Labour Force in Relation to the Total Labour Force, between 1946 and 1958	11
--	----

INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the twentieth century, agriculture was the dominant industry in Canada. Over 60 per cent of the population lived in rural areas, the majority on farms. By 1956, however, the farm population had diminished to about 17 per cent of the total. Although Canada's population had increased by more than 10 million between 1901 and 1956, there had been a decline both in the number of people and in the number of workers on Canadian farms.

The diminishing importance of agriculture has been inevitable in a country in which technology has encouraged the growth of secondary and tertiary industries. The economist explains the decline as primarily due to the inelasticity of demand for farm products, as incomes rise in a highly industrialized society. As advances are made in technology, productivity and real incomes increase. A smaller proportion of total income is required to meet food requirements, and higher proportions of income are spent on non-farm products. Thus, while other industries continue to grow, the agricultural industry steadily falls behind.

Primary agriculture has been vulnerable in our society for other reasons. The majority of farm enterprises are still operated under more or less perfect competitive conditions. Each farmer operates as an individual with little or no control over the aggregate supply or demand situation in the market. In many other industries, enterprises have become organized to the extent that the basic elements of pure competition have been at least partially removed. To encourage industrial development, governments and society in general have been willing to entertain horizontal and vertical integration of firms and large corporations which provide some measure of control over supply costs and demand prices. Since specialization in production has made the farm enterprise increasingly dependent on the products of non-agricultural industries, the development of organized strength in other industries has materially weakened the overall competitive position of agriculture.

While there are innumerable aspects associated with the relative decline of agriculture in the Canadian economy, the following study is limited to an examination primarily of one group of factors - those underlying or related to the trends in the labour force. A study of the labour force in agriculture merits attention if for no reason other than the fact that there is a scarcity of information on this aspect of the industry. Agricultural economic studies have concentrated on such aspects as settlement problems and land tenure, choice of farm enterprises, farm production and income, capital and credit problems. Farm labour, however, has too often been accepted as a given factor. The farmer, himself, may think of his labour or the labour of members of his family as a residual and expendable item. He is more concerned with attempts to increase production through the use of efficient machinery or suitable breeds of livestock. While aware of the lengthy hours he must put in with his tractor or combine, he does not usually analyse this labour time in a business sense as carefully as he considers the advantage or disadvantage of the machine to his farm returns.

Economists think of the factors of production in a farm enterprise as land, labour, capital and management. While there is due concern over the importance of the labour and management factors, the common pitfall may be the general acceptance of the farm family as a given, and stable, unit of labour and management. With family labour as the given factor, most of the consideration has been devoted to the proper combinations of land and capital which will provide the

successful or optimum enterprise. Very little attention has been reserved for working conditions and other problems which are more or less peculiar to the farm labour force.

With the rapid changes that are occurring in agriculture at present, it is inevitable that more serious thought will be devoted to its labour force. The following study presents data outlining the trends and characteristics of the farm labour force. It includes a brief analysis of some factors, such as the changing farm population and changes in the size and mechanization of farms, which have had an important influence on the agricultural labour force. The study covers the period from 1921 to 1959, but the main emphasis is on the changes that have taken place since the mid-1940's.

The principal sources of data are the labour force surveys conducted monthly by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, and Canadian decennial censuses. Data from other sources are acknowledged in foot-notes. It should be borne in mind that labour force surveys and census data are not directly comparable because the surveys are conducted on a sampling basis only. There are also some differences in concepts and methods used in carrying out enumeration, as well as differences in interpretation of questions by enumerators.¹

The study provides an examination of trends in the agricultural labour force within the five main labour force regions in Canada (See regions in Figure 1, page 11). The reader should be warned, however, that changes within smaller areas may have differed fairly widely from the trends revealed by national and regional statistics.

¹ See, for example, the note on the comparability of 1951 Census and Labour Force Survey data concerning the labour force in agriculture, Appendix A.

1 – THE AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE

In Relation to Trends in Other Industries

The Canadian farm population has been declining considerably in relation to the total population of the country. Of 8.8 million people in Canada in 1921, slightly more than half lived in rural areas - predominantly on farms. Thirty-five years later, in 1956, although the total population had increased to 16.1 million, there were only 2.7 million people on farms.¹ Although no overall census data are available to show trends since 1956, the continuing decline in the agricultural labour force indicates that the farm population has declined further.

The agricultural labour force, which consists of all civilian non-institutional workers 14 years old and over who are working or seeking work on farms, has been declining even more rapidly than the farm population. The decline has been particularly noticeable since the mid 1940's. In 1946 there were 1,190,000 persons in the farm labour force; by 1959 there were only 703,000.² During this same period the number of persons in the entire Canadian labour force rose from 4.8 to over 6 million. Taking into account the decline of nearly half a million persons in the agricultural industry, the increase in the total labour force indicates an addition of almost two million persons in the non-agricultural industries.

If the farm labour force is becoming much smaller in comparison with the non-farm labour force, how does it compare with the individual industries that compose the non-agricultural sector? In the decade 1948-58, agriculture lost its place as the second largest industry and became fourth in terms of employment. Of the ten non-agricultural industries, manufacturing was the only one that exceeded agriculture in 1948, but by 1958 the service and trade industries were larger as well.³ In 1958 manufacturing accounted for 25.7 per cent of the total number of persons with jobs, service industries accounted for 22.0 per cent, the trade industries for 16.0 per cent and agriculture for only 12.4 per cent. Of the remaining seven smaller industries construction and transportation were the largest, employing 7.6 and 7.5 per cent, respectively, of the total number of persons with jobs. Complete data for all industries are shown in Table A, Appendix B.

Before discussing the details of trends and other changes in the farm labour force, it is important to note that the composition of the latter differs markedly from the composition of the labour force in non-agricultural industries. In most other industries, paid employees make up the majority of the workers. In agriculture, however, paid or hired workers are a very minor group. About 85 per cent of the farm labour force is made up of self-employed farm operators and unpaid members of farm families. In no other large-sized industry in Canada is there such a high proportion of unpaid labour. In 1958, although agriculture provided employment for only 12 per cent of the persons with jobs in the Canadian labour force, it had 74 per cent of the total number of unpaid family workers. The large number of self-employed farm operators in agriculture also accounted for about 50 per cent of all self-employed workers in the Canadian labour force. On the other hand, however, agriculture employed only 2 per cent of the total number

¹ **Censuses of Canada**, 1941, Vol. VIII, Table 1; 1956, Bulletin 2-11, Table 1.

² Yearly averages, **D B S Labour Force Surveys**.

³ The ten non-agricultural industries and agriculture make up the eleven Canadian industries as defined in the **D B S Standard Industrial Classification** of 1951.

of paid workers in the labour force. These characteristics set agriculture apart from most other industries. The industry still consists of many small family enterprises, depending for its labour force mainly on family help.

In recent years, however, there has been a noticeable decline in the proportion of unpaid family members, which indicates that the traditional composition of the agricultural labour force may change. This trend is examined more fully in a later section of this study.

From 1921 to 1945

According to Canadian decennial census data, the number of persons 14 years of age and over who were occupied in farming remained fairly constant at slightly over one million from 1921 to 1941. ¹ In 1931 with the onset of the depression, there was an increase of nearly 100,000 persons over the 1921 figure. By 1941 most of this increase had dropped off again, indicating that there had been very little long-term change during this 20-year period (Table 1).

By 1941, therefore, there was still little indication of a long-run decline in the farm labour force in Canada as a whole. In one region, however, the decline had already begun. It occurred first in the Atlantic region, the oldest settled area in Canada. In Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick farm labour declined during both the 1921-31 and 1931-41 decades (Table 1). During the earlier decade from 1921-31, however, there were increases in all of the other regions which more than offset the decline in the Atlantic region. In the four western provinces new farm settlement was still taking place and the labour force growth in these areas was relatively large.

In the second decade from 1931-41, the growth trend in the West came to an end and in Ontario the farm labour force showed a distinct decline. For the Canadian total, there was a decline of 4 per cent in the number of persons occupied in agriculture and all except one of the five regions showed declines. The one exception was the province of Quebec. Here, the number of persons with agricultural occupations rose from 228,000 to 255,000, an increase much greater than Quebec had experienced in the 1921-31 decade.

¹ Prior to the 1951 decennial census, the working status of persons 14 years of age and over was determined on the basis of the "gainfully occupied" concept, which differed from the "labour force" concept introduced in 1951. The gainfully occupied definition referred to a person's usual activity over the course of the whole year prior to the census date, while the labour force definition applies to a person's activity at a given point of time, i.e., during a specified week.

Table 1 — Trends in the Number of Persons 14 Years of Age and Over Occupied in Agriculture, Both Sexes, Canada and Regions, 1921-41

Year	Canada	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(Thousands of persons)						
1921	1,035	114	218	294	374	35
1931	1,128	108	228	305	443	44
1941	1,084	97	255	270	420	42
(Percentage change in agriculture)						
1921-31	+9	- 5	+ 5	+ 4	+18	+26
1931-41	-4	-10	+12	-11	- 5	- 5
(Number in agriculture as percentage of total in all occupations)						
1921	33	33	28	26	54	16
1931	29	31	22	23	49	14
1941	26	26	22	18	48	13

SOURCE: Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. IV, Table 2.

NOTE: Data do not include Newfoundland.

Between 1921 and 1941, the percentage of workers occupied in agriculture declined in every province. For Canada as a whole, the number in agriculture dropped from 33 to 26 per cent of the all-occupations total. In Prince Edward Island and the three Prairie provinces, of course, much higher percentages of the total labour force were engaged in agriculture in 1921 and higher proportions remained in agriculture in 1941. Nevertheless, the change towards a greater labour force in non-agricultural occupations was also taking place in these provinces. Between 1921 and 1941 the number of people working on farms in Prince Edward Island had dropped from 60 to 53 per cent of the total in all occupations. In Saskatchewan the proportion working on farms dropped from 65 to 59 per cent, and in Alberta from 53 to 49 per cent of the total. ¹

Estimates of the agricultural labour force which have been made on June 1 of each year back to 1931, show the trend in agriculture annually through the depression years of the thirties (see Chart 1). ² According to these data the farm labour force reached its peak in 1939, when there were 1,379,000 persons with jobs in agriculture. With a greater amount of unemployment in other industries during the depression years, a shift of workers into agriculture took place. Between 1931 and 1933, the number of persons with farm jobs rose from 33.1 to 36.4 per cent of the total number of persons with jobs in Canada.

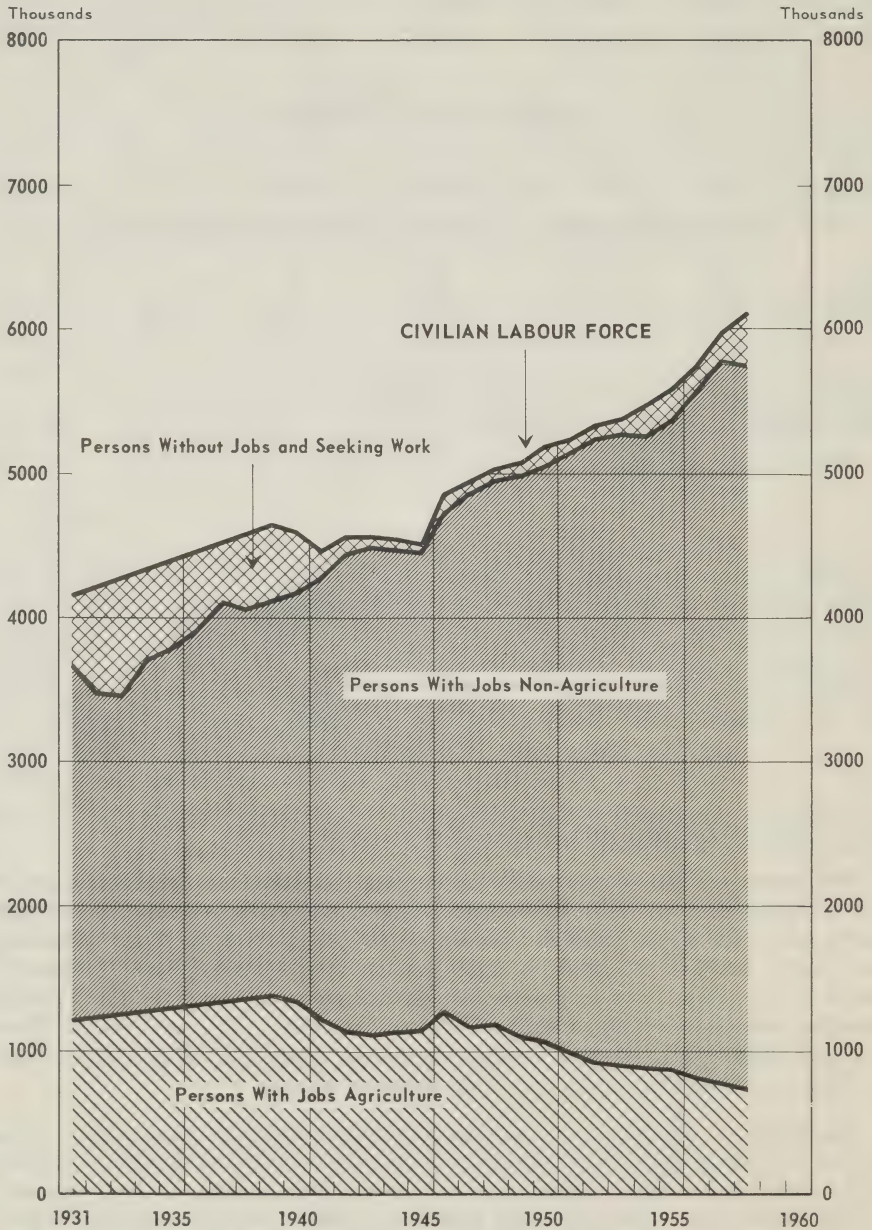
During World War II the agricultural labour force dropped sharply when younger men left the farms to join the armed services or to take advantage of the higher wages offered in non-farm industries. The lowest point during the war was reached in 1943, when there were 1,118,000 persons employed in agriculture. With the end of the war, the farm labour force rose briefly again with the re-establishment of veterans on farms but after 1946 it began to decline.

¹ Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. IV, Table 2.

² See also, Table B, Appendix B.

Chart I

**THE CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE AND PERSONS WITH JOBS IN AGRICULTURAL
AND NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES,* BOTH SEXES
AT JUNE 1 OR NEAREST DATES, 1931-58**



*Includes Newfoundland from 1950, but excludes residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Source: DBS Reference Paper No. 23, revised, and DBS Reference Paper No. 58, 1958 revision.

From 1946 to 1958

Since November 1945, the availability of data from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics' labour force surveys has made it possible to analyze labour force trends within much shorter time periods than is permitted by decennial or quinquennial census data.¹

These data reveal that the agricultural labour force established a secular or long-run declining tendency in the 1940's. As measured by the average annual data for persons with jobs, the number of farm workers² in Canada declined from 1,186,000 in 1946 to 712,000 in 1958 (Table 2 and Chart II). The total decline of 474,000 workers, therefore, averaged 39,000 per year.

Although there has been a rapid rate of decline in agricultural employment in all regions between 1946 and 1958, the Prairie provinces, Ontario and Quebec have experienced the greatest decline in absolute numbers. The decline in the Prairies accounted for 169,000 of the total decline of 474,000 workers. The decline in Ontario was 145,000 workers and in Quebec, 116,000. Added together the changes in these three regions accounted for 90 per cent of the total decline in Canada.

Between 1946 and 1958, the number of persons with farm jobs in Canada has been declining at an average compound rate of about 4 per cent per year (see Table C, Appendix B). This is a very rapid rate of decline. It is probably unlikely that farm employment will continue to decline at this fast pace. If it did, the number of persons with jobs in agriculture would drop to about 300,000 in the next twenty years, i.e., by 1978.

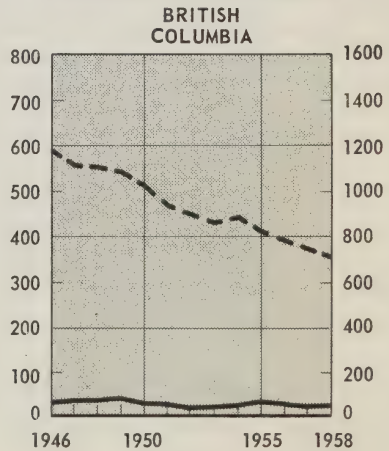
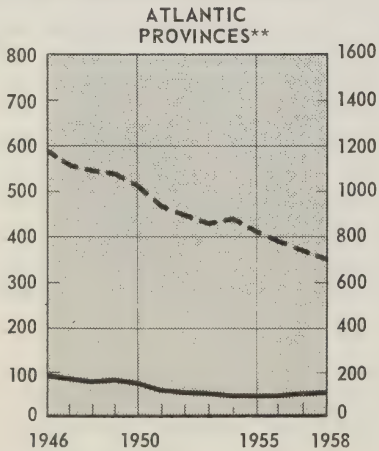
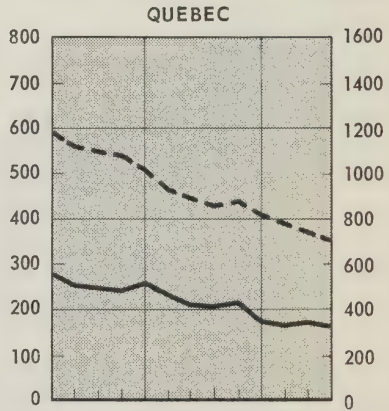
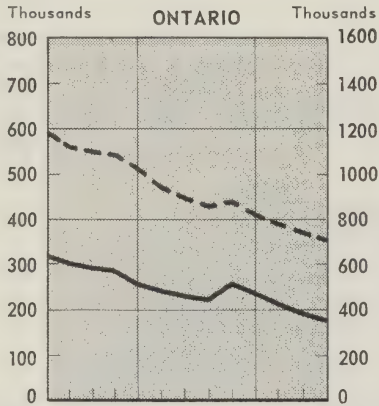
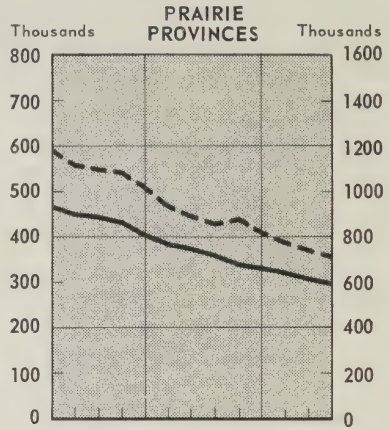
¹ Labour force surveys were first conducted on a quarterly basis, but beginning in November 1952, they have been completed monthly. They are sample surveys which include over 30,000 Canadian households and obtain labour force information for persons 14 years of age and over for the week preceding the start of survey interviews.

² Including all status groups, farm operators, paid workers and unpaid family members.

Chart II

**REGIONAL TRENDS IN THE CANADIAN
AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE,
PERSONS WITH JOBS,* BOTH SEXES,
1946-58**

--- CANADA (read right scale) — REGION (read left scale)



*Annual averages.

**Newfoundland included with Atlantic provinces from 1949.

Source: DBS Reference Paper No. 58, 1958 revision and DBS Labour Force Surveys.

Table 2 — Regional Trends in the Canadian Agricultural Labour Force, Persons with Jobs, Both Sexes, Annual Averages, 1946–59

Year	Canada	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(Thousands of persons)						
1946	1,186	92	277	320	466	31
1947	1,122	86	252	300	450	34
1948	1,096	81	246	290	444	35
1949	1,079(a)	83	242	284	433	37
1950	1,018	78	255	253	403	29
1951	939	62	229	238	382	28
1952	891	58	209	228	375	21
1953	859	56	203	220	359	21
1954	878	50	214	253	338	23
1955	819	49	172	236	331	31
1956	776	49	165	213	323	26
1957	744	53	171	191	306	23
1958	712	55	161	175	297	24
1959	692	57	153	174	284	24

SOURCES: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, **Reference Paper No. 58**, 1958 revision, and DBS Labour Force Surveys.

(a) Data for Newfoundland are included with total for Canada and Atlantic region from October, 1949. However, there are only about 3,000 persons employed in the agricultural labour force in Newfoundland and this addition had little effect on the overall trend.

In Canada as a whole, the farm labour force declined at a faster rate in the first half of the 1946-58 period than in the second half. In 1951 there was a drop of nearly 8 per cent from 1950 in the number of persons with farm jobs. During the economic recession of 1954, the trend was interrupted briefly when the number increased 2.2 per cent over the average for 1953. With this change in 1954, the average compound rate of decline from 1952 to 1958 has been 3.6 per cent, or approximately one per cent lower than the rate of decline between 1946 and 1952.

Among the three regions with the largest number of farm workers, i.e. Quebec, Ontario and the Prairie provinces, the highest rate of decline has taken place in Ontario. Although the Prairie provinces have shown the largest decline in absolute numbers from 1946-58, the average rate for this region has been lower than the rates for either Ontario or Quebec.

In making this comparison of farm labour decline in different regions, it is interesting to note that the Prairie region is the only one that has shown declines every year throughout this twelve-year period. During economic recessions in 1954 and 1957-58, when there was a shortage of jobs in non-agricultural industries, some of the other regions showed an increase in the number of persons employed in agriculture. In the Prairie region, however, the trend in agricultural employment has been less affected by changes in general business activity in Canada.

In a previous part of this chapter, the decline in the number of agricultural workers, relative to those in all industries, has been reviewed for the period from 1921 to 1941. In this earlier twenty-year period, the number of persons occupied in agriculture dropped from 33 to 26 per cent of the total in all occupations in Canada. However, the agricultural labour force was not declining in absolute numbers to the extent that it has in more recent years. In 1941, therefore, farm workers still accounted for a fairly high percentage of the total in all occupations.

During the twelve years from 1946-58, with the rapid decline in the agricultural labour force and continued growth in the non-agricultural labour force, there has been a sharp accentuation of the decline in agriculture. In 1946, the agricultural labour force was 25 per cent of the total labour force in Canada; in 1958 it was only 12 per cent (Table 3 and Figure 1).

In the three Atlantic provinces the agricultural labour force dropped from 22 to 13 per cent of the region's total labour force during this period. In Quebec and Ontario it dropped from 21 and 19 per cent to 10 and 8 per cent. In the three Prairie provinces, which are still considered to be major agricultural areas, the decline in the agricultural labour force was from 48 per cent of the total in 1946, to 29 per cent in 1958.

Table 3 — Changes in the Agricultural, Non-Agricultural and Total Labour Force, Both Sexes, Canada and Regions, 1946-58

	Canada	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(Thousands of persons)						
Agricultural L.F.						
1946	1,190	93	278	321	467	31
1958	729	57	165	179	303	25
Non-Agricultural L.F.						
1946	3,638	322	1,059	1,380	502	375
1958	5,290	379	1,563	2,077	745	526
Total Labour Force						
1946	4,828	415	1,337	1,701	969	406
1958	6,019	436	1,728	2,256	1,048	551
(Percentage change from 1946-58)						
Agricultural L.F.	-39	-39	-41	-44	-35	-19
Non-Agricultural L.F.	+45	+18	+48	+51	+48	+40
Total Labour Force	+25	+ 5	+29	+33	+ 8	+36
(Number in agriculture as percentage of total labour force)						
1946	25	22	21	19	48	8
1958	12	13	10	8	29	5

SOURCE: DBS Labour Force Surveys, averages for four monthly surveys in 1946 and closest corresponding four survey dates in 1958.

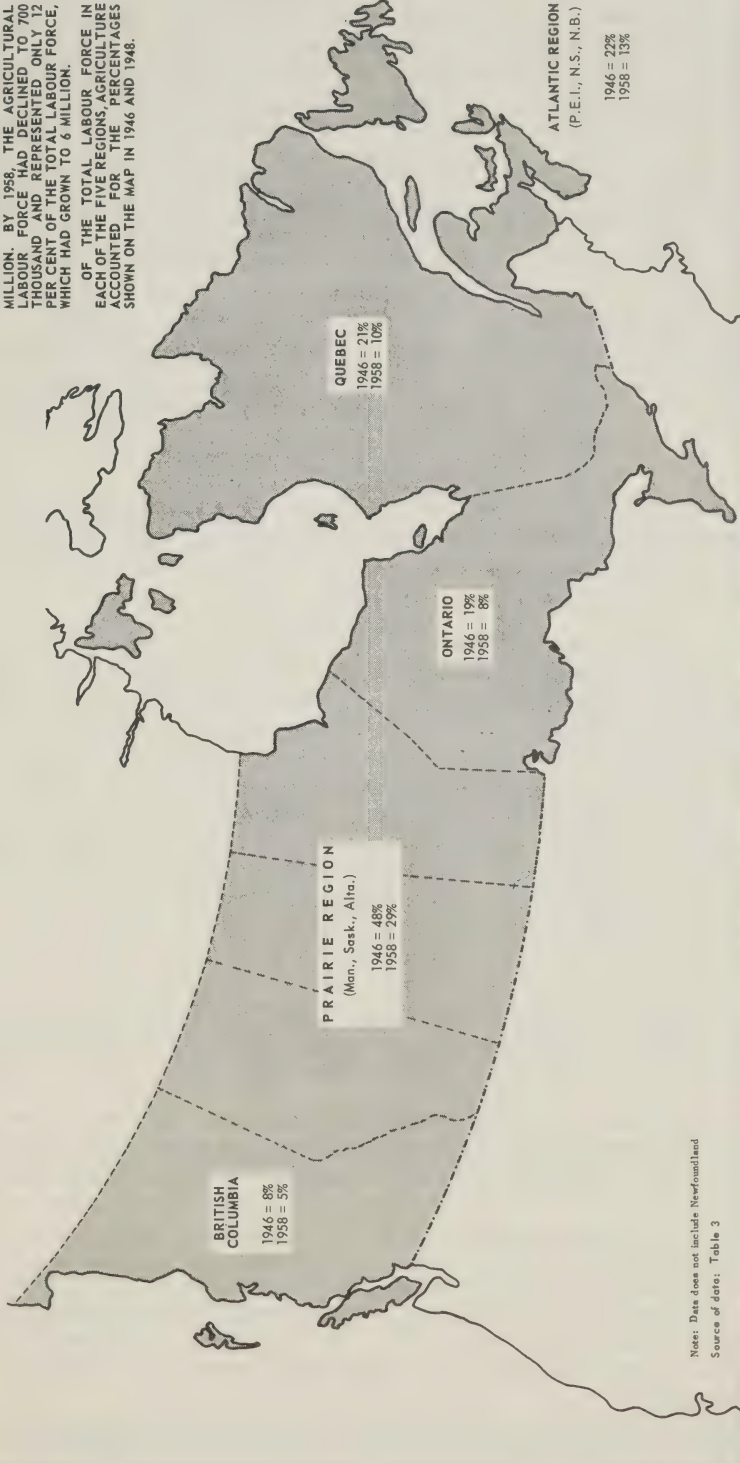
NOTE: Data do not include Newfoundland.

Figure 1

MAP OF CANADA AND THE FIVE LABOUR FORCE REGIONS, SHOWING THE DECLINE OF THE AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE
IN RELATION TO THE TOTAL LABOUR FORCE, BETWEEN 1946 AND 1958

IN 1946, THE AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE INCLUDED 1.2 MILLION PERSONS AND REPRESENTED 25 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE OF 4.8 MILLION. BY 1958, THE AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE HAD DECLINED TO 700 THOUSAND AND REPRESENTED ONLY 12 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL LABOUR FORCE, WHICH HAD GROWN TO 6 MILLION.

OF THE TOTAL LABOUR FORCE IN EACH OF THE FIVE REGIONS AGRICULTURE ACCOUNTED FOR THE PERCENTAGES SHOWN ON THE MAP IN 1946 AND 1948.



Note: Data does not include Newfoundland
Source of data: Table 3

In studying the exodus from the agricultural labour force, the changes that have occurred in the agricultural, non-agricultural and total labour force provide some interesting comparisons when the data are examined on a regional basis. Between 1946 and 1958, the agricultural labour force has declined in all of the regions while the non-agricultural and total labour force have increased. The increase in the size of the total labour force for Canada as a whole was 1.2 million, a gain of 25 per cent over the labour force in 1946. ¹ Most of this increase occurred in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the non-agricultural component of the labour force also increased significantly in the two central provinces and British Columbia.

In the Prairie region, however, a high relative increase of 48 per cent occurred in the non-agricultural labour force despite the fact that the total labour force increased by only 8 per cent between 1946 and 1958. The gain in the non-agricultural labour force in the Prairie provinces was therefore more directly related to the exodus from the agricultural labour force than was the case in the two central provinces and British Columbia. In these three regions the decline in the agricultural labour force could have accounted for only a small part of the total increase in non-agricultural labour. ²

In the three Atlantic provinces, the total labour force increase of 5 per cent between 1946 and 1958 was the smallest in any region, and the non-agricultural labour force increase of 18 per cent was also much smaller than the changes shown in other regions.

The decline in Canadian agricultural employment between 1946 and 1958 was even greater, in relative terms, than that experienced in the United States. In that country agricultural employment declined from 8.3 million in 1946 to 5.8 million in 1958, or by about 30 per cent. ³ In Canada, the decline in agricultural employment was about 40 per cent. As a result of the swifter decline in Canada, the proportion of the total labour force employed in agriculture in this country is now fairly similar to the proportion employed in the United States. In 1946 the number of persons employed in agriculture represented 15 per cent of all persons employed in the United States, compared with 25 per cent in Canada. In 1958, however, the comparable proportions were about 9 per cent in the United States and 12 per cent in Canada.

In 1959

This study was almost completed before data from labour force surveys covering the entire 1959 year became available. A brief summary of this more recent information is given below.

In 1959, agricultural employment continued to decline but the rate of decline was much slower than it has been in any year since 1954. The number of persons with jobs in agriculture in 1959 averaged 692,000, which was 20,000 below the

¹ Without including the labour force in Newfoundland in 1958.

² There is little doubt that immigration has contributed to the growth of the non-agricultural labour force to a much greater extent in the two central provinces and British Columbia than in other regions. From 1946 to 1958 inclusive, over 80 per cent of the total of 1.8 million immigrants arriving in Canada were destined to Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.

³ *Employment and Earnings*, Vol. 6, No. 3, Table A-1, United States Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.

average for 1958 (Table 2). The rate of decline between 1958 and 1959 averaged about 2.8 per cent, which was considerably less than has been experienced in other recent years (see Table C, Appendix B).

Two regions, Quebec and the Prairie provinces, accounted for all of the decline in agricultural employment in 1959. In the Atlantic region employment actually increased slightly (Table 2), while in Ontario and British Columbia employment remained near the 1958 level.

For Canada as a whole, changes in the farm labour force during 1959 had little effect on the longer term trends established between 1946 and 1958. With a smaller decline in agricultural employment in 1959, however, the total decline between 1946 and 1959 averaged 38,000 per year rather than 39,000, as shown above for the period 1946-58.

In 1959, the total labour force in all industries in Canada increased by about 100,000 persons to reach a year-round average of 6,228,000. The labour force in agriculture, at a year-round average of 703,000, accounted for only 11 per cent of the total labour force in Canada.

Recent Immigration as a Source of Farm Labour

During the first thirteen years after World War II, over one and three-quarter million immigrants entered Canada. Of this total, there were over 161,000 persons who gave their intended occupation as farming (see Table D, Appendix B). During this 1946-58 period, the agricultural group represented nearly 17 per cent of all adult immigrants who were destined to the labour force.

The intended occupations of newly-arrived immigrants provides little indication of the number who eventually settled as permanent farmers, however. There is very little official data that would provide this information but it is general knowledge that a large number of farm immigrants moved away from farms soon after their arrival in Canada. In the earlier post-war years, particularly from 1948-53, the Canadian government gave preference to immigrants who would work in agriculture and other primary industries. In 1949 and 1950, 36 to 39 per cent of all adult immigrants destined to the labour force stated they intended to farm or work on farms. The census of the labour force in 1951, however, showed that only 13.7 per cent of male and 4.0 per cent of female immigrants who arrived in Canada between January 1, 1946 and May 31, 1951 were still in agricultural occupations.¹ With the admittance of more immigrants with technical capacities in recent years, the number who have stated they intend to work on farms has dropped. From 1956 to 1958 about 8 per cent of the annual number of immigrants entering the labour force were intended for farms.

During the early post-war years, however, immigration was an important factor in helping to prevent recurring farm labour scarcities. Between 1946 and 1953, over 25,000 immigrant farm workers came to Canada in special group movements under the agreement that they would accept employment in agriculture for periods of one to two years. Under this obligation, the workers were available to agriculture for longer periods than might have been the case otherwise. These special movements were organized through the co-operation of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, the Department of Labour and the National Employment Service.

¹ The numbers of immigrant males and females in agricultural occupations at the census date were 19,139 and 1,888, respectively. See, *Census of Canada, 1951*, Vol. X, p. 271.

Beginning in 1950 the Settlement Division of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration has kept records of the number of immigrants who have either purchased or rented farms. Although this is not an inclusive record of all immigrants, the Settlement Division has received reports on nearly 3,900 who have purchased and an additional 850 who have rented farms during the nine-year period from 1950 to the end of 1958. Including family members these two groups totalled over 23,000 immigrants who can be classed as more permanent agricultural residents. Of this total, however, only 3,500 entered the agricultural labour force. The remainder were classed as dependents.

The above figures understate the total number of permanent agricultural settlers from immigration because some immigrants make their own arrangements to purchase farms and these cases are not reported to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. Nevertheless, the data substantiate the conclusion that the number remaining on farms is much smaller than the number of immigrants who stated on arrival that they intended to farm. Thus, although the total post-war immigration to Canada has been higher than in any other period except in the early 1900's, the effect of immigration on the farm population and farm labour appears to have been very moderate compared with the period 1901 to 1921. During this earlier period, when productive land was more readily available, the number of farms in Canada increased from 500,000 to 700,000,¹ largely as a result of the immigration of new farm operators and their families.

¹ See *Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. VI, Part I, Table 1.*

2 – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE

Male and Female Farm Labour

More than 90 per cent of the labour force in agriculture consists of males. In the DBS sample survey, females are included in the labour force only if they contribute 20 hours or more a week towards the operation of farms other than by housekeeping or tending a kitchen garden from which no commercial sales are made. The 20-hour requirement ensures that all women reporting farm work are participating in a fair amount of outdoor activity but because of this stipulation, the number of females recorded in the agricultural labour force is probably understated to some extent.¹

During the first twelve years in which labour force surveys have been conducted, the number of females in the agricultural labour force has declined relatively more than the number of males. Between 1946 and 1958 the number of males declined from 1,033,000 to 673,000 (annual averages). The number of females dropped from 157,000 to 52,000. Thus, in relative terms the number of males dropped 34.8 per cent while the number of females declined by 66.9 per cent.

In 1946, females represented 13.2 per cent of the labour force in agriculture but this proportion declined to 4.4 per cent in 1954 (Table 4). In 1956 and 1957, however, the proportion of women began to rise slightly and in 1958 there was a noticeable increase in the number and percentage of females.

Table 4 – Percentage Distribution of the Labour Force in Agriculture by Sex, Annual Averages, Canada, 1946–58

Year	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
	(Thousands of persons)			(Percentage distribution)		
1946	1,190	1,033	157	100.0	86.8	13.2
1947	1,125	980	145	100.0	87.1	12.9
1948	1,100	978	122	100.0	88.9	11.1
1949	1,084	981	103	100.0	90.5	9.5
1950	998	924	74	100.0	92.6	7.4
1951	943	871	72	100.0	92.4	7.6
1952	895	830	65	100.0	92.7	7.3
1953	863	821	42	100.0	95.1	4.9
1954	884	845	39	100.0	95.6	4.4
1955	825	789	36	100.0	95.6	4.4
1956	781	741	40	100.0	94.9	5.1
1957	751	712	39	100.0	94.8	5.2
1958	725	673	52	100.0	92.8	7.2

SOURCE: DBS Labour Force Surveys.

NOTE: Data for Newfoundland included from 1949.

¹ Males, on the other hand, are included if they are seeking work in agriculture or if they work one hour or more during the labour force survey week

Most of the increase in the number of females in 1958 took place among unpaid family workers. This group provides a very flexible source of farm help, as family household members can readily move in or out of the farm labour force. It is therefore difficult to predict whether or not the increase in females represents a distinct change in the trend from the smaller numbers employed in other recent years.¹

Unfortunately, official data on female workers are not very extensive. Agricultural censuses have shown very few data on female employment, with the exception of statistics on hired workers. Prior to the 1951 Census most of the females on farms were recorded as housewives only, due to the method of classification by main occupation throughout the year rather than during a specific census week. There are difficulties in enumerating female labour in the agricultural census due to the problem of drawing an accurate line between the number of hours farm women spend in outdoor work and indoor housework. With the increasing use of machinery which requires less heavy manual labour, however, it is possible that females may form an increased proportion of the agricultural labour force in future years.

An important facet of the declining trend in the farm labour force is the tendency towards an imbalance of males and females in the farm population. According to the Population Census of 1956, males accounted for 53.6 per cent of the total farm population. In the age groups of 14 years and over, males represented 54.8 per cent of the farm population (Table 5). In other words, there were 121 males to every 100 females aged 14 and over. In the Prairie provinces the ratio of males to females was the highest. In Saskatchewan there were 130 males to 100 females aged 14 and over. In Quebec the ratio of males to females for the same age groups was 117 to 100.

The low ratio of females to males on farms is not a recent event. The census of 1921, although it did not provide a breakdown of the rural population by farm and non-farm groups, showed that males accounted for 53.7 per cent of the total rural population.

¹ In 1959, the number of females in the agricultural labour force declined slightly, to an annual average of 48,000.

Table 5 — Percentage Distribution of the Canadian Farm Population(a) Aged 14 and Over, (b) by Region and Sex, 1956

	Canada(c)	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(Thousands of persons)						
Male	931	95	235	232	330	35
Female	766	79	201	197	257	29
Total	1,697	174	436	429	587	64
(Percentage distribution) (d)						
Male	54.8	54.2	54.0	54.2	56.2	54.2
Female	45.2	45.8	46.0	45.8	43.8	45.8
(Number of males per hundred females)						
	121	118	117	118	128	118

SOURCE: Census of Canada, 1956, Bulletin 1-9, Table 17.

(a) The 1956 census of the farm population excluded 115,168 persons (all ages) living on farms in localities classified as urban.

(b) Since the census did not provide a breakdown of the farm population in the 10 - 14 age group, the 14 age group was estimated. This was done by taking the total population in the 14, single-year class and multiplying this figure by the percentage of the total population aged 10 - 14 who were living on farms.

(c) Includes Newfoundland, Yukon and Northwest Territories.

(d) Percentages calculated before rounding data to thousands.

The deficit of females on farms is largely equated with the surplus of females in the urban population. In the exodus out of agriculture, women have apparently been leading the way. In the 1956 farm population, 48.5 per cent of all persons under 15 years of age were females, but the proportion of females dropped to 44.3 per cent among persons 15 to 24 years of age. In the urban population, however, 49.2 per cent of persons under 15 years of age were females, while 51.9 per cent of persons in the 15 to 24 age groups were females. ¹

Participation Rates

Labour force surveys provide data on participation rates for the entire Canadian labour force but there is no breakdown of comparable data for the agricultural labour force. ² It is possible, however, to make an approximation of participation rates in agriculture by comparing the farm population derived from the census with the number of persons in the agricultural labour force, as shown by labour force surveys. ³ This comparison for the 1951 and 1956 census dates is made in Table 6.

¹ See *Census of Canada, 1956, Bulletin 1-9, Table 17.*

² "Participation Rates" refer to the percentages of the population aged 14 and over who participate in the labour force.

³ It should be noted that the census farm population includes all persons living on farms regardless of their occupations. In view of the fact that an increasing number of farm residents have off-farm occupations, the above comparison would tend to show lower participation rates than a comparison with the farm population that is engaged in agricultural occupations only.

These data show the low participation rates for females as compared with males. In June 1956 about 84 per cent of all males aged 14 and over in the farm population participated in the labour force. Precise rates for females must be regarded rather skeptically due to the possibility of estimate error in smaller numbers included under separate age groups. For all females aged 14 and over, however, the participation rate was only 5.5 per cent.

Table 6 — Agricultural Labour Force Participation Rates by Age and Sex, Canada, 1951 and 1956(a)

1951	14-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65 +	Total 14 & Over
(Percentages)						
Male	69.5	92.7	97.5	97.1	64.9	88.6
Female(b)	11.0	17.3	13.7	11.8	3.7	12.1
Both Sexes	42.8	60.5	58.5	59.8	39.7	54.4
1956						
Male	53.7	75.3	94.0	100.0(c)	66.0	84.1
Female	5.8	4.5	6.3	5.5	2.7	5.5
Both Sexes	31.7	45.2	52.2	59.6	39.8	48.6

SOURCES: Censuses of Canada, 1951, Vol. 1, Table 21; 1956, Bulletin 1-9, Table 17; and special tabulations from Labour Force Surveys, June 2, 1951 and May 19, 1956.

(a) At June census dates.

(b) Due to labour force survey sampling variabilities, estimates of participation rates for females are probably less accurate than those for males.

(c) The labour force survey showed a slightly larger number in this age group than the population census.

NOTE: Data include Newfoundland.

For males, the highest participation rates occurred in the 25 to 44 and 45 to 64 age groups. Well over 90 per cent of the farm population in these age groups participated in the labour force. There was also a relatively high participation rate for males aged 65 or more. In the total Canadian labour force only about one-third of the men in this older age group participated in the labour force in May 1956. In agriculture, however, nearly two-thirds of the older men were participants.

The comparison of agricultural labour force participation in 1951 with participation in 1956, indicates some decline among both males and females. The decline has taken place primarily among those in the youngest age groups of 14 to 19 and 20 to 24 (Table 6). This is probably a result of the tendency for youths to remain in school longer than they have in the past.

A special tabulation made from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics' Labour Survey for the week ended May 24, 1958, provided a means of checking participation in the labour force by farm residents. This survey showed an estimated total of 1,855,000 persons resident on farms who were 14 years of age and over. Of

this total, 1,002,000 were males and 853,000 were females. The total of both sexes with jobs in the labour force was 940,000. This figure, however, included those with jobs in both agriculture and non-agricultural industries. Among the males, 811,000, or 80.9 per cent of the total, participated in the labour force. The majority of men (626,000) worked in agriculture, while 185,000 had non-farm jobs. Among females, 129,000, or 15.1 per cent participated in the labour force, but only 52,000 women worked in agriculture as 77,000 had off-farm jobs.

Age Distribution of Farm Operators and Other Workers

Nearly two-thirds of the labour force in agriculture consists, at the present time, of farm operators.¹ Therefore, changes in the age distribution of this group shows the trend of a large and important part of the farm labour force.

The Census of Agriculture has included data on the age of farm operators since 1921. According to these data, the proportion of farm operators in the upper age groups increased between the censuses of 1921, 1931 and 1941 but then dropped again between 1941 and 1951. No doubt the exodus of younger men who joined the armed services during the war caused some of the increase in older age groups during the war years, and their return would result in a decline in the proportion in older age groups again after the war. For this reason the 1941 and 1951 census data, if considered alone, are probably not indicative of a normal trend in age distribution.

Among 621,000 Canadian farm operators reporting to the census in 1951, 40.9 per cent were 50 years old or more (Table 7). An additional 24.8 per cent were 40 to 49 years old, leaving only 34.3 per cent who were less than 40. Going back to 1921, a smaller proportion (35.7 per cent) were 50 or above in age, the proportion who were 40 to 49 was practically the same as in 1951, but 39.6 per cent were less than 40.

¹ The term "farm operator" applies to the person directly responsible for agricultural operations and management of the farm. Normally, of course, the father of the farm household is the operator of the farm.

Table 7 — Number of Farm Operators and Age Distribution by Region, Canada, 1921-51

Year	Canada	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(Thousands of persons)						
1921	684	95	136	188	243	22
1931	671	83	127	177	258	26
1941	674	74	143	165	266	26
1951	621(a)	60	134	150	248	26
(Percentage distribution by age group) (b)						
Under 40						
1921	39.6	27.4	38.8	32.7	50.8	33.2
1951	34.3	27.0	37.3	28.8	39.0	25.0
40 — 49						
1921	24.7	23.3	24.8	24.5	25.0	28.5
1951	24.8	23.2	26.0	25.4	24.1	25.6
50 — 59						
1921	18.9	21.2	19.4	22.3	14.9	22.2
1951	21.3	22.1	20.9	23.8	19.6	23.1
60 & Over						
1921	16.8	28.1	17.0	20.5	9.3	16.1
1951	19.6	27.7	15.8	22.0	17.3	26.3

SOURCES: Censuses of Canada, 1951, Vol. X, p. 472; and Vol. VI, Parts 1 and 2, Table 2.

(a) Includes Newfoundland, Yukon and Northwest Territories.

(b) Percentages calculated before rounding data to thousands.

Despite the qualifications that must be made to historical comparisons of the age of farm operators from census data, ¹ the information does reveal significant differences in age distributions in different regions. In the older settled areas, for example the Atlantic region, the proportions of farm operators in senior age groups are considerably higher than in newer areas. In 1951 the number of operators who were 50 years old or more represented about 50 per cent of the total in the Atlantic provinces. In Ontario, nearly 46 per cent of the operators were 50 years old and above. In the three Prairie provinces and Quebec, however, the numbers in these senior groups accounted for only 37 per cent of the respective totals.

¹ In reporting the age of farm operators the census also tends to show some bias towards the older age groups. The census method is to list only one operator per farm and in partnership enterprises, such as father-son partnerships, the census lists only the senior member as operator.

If the farm population continues to decline, there may be no replacement for many of the older farm operators, particularly in provinces which have the highest percentages of operators already due for retirement. It is possible, therefore, that the farm labour force may continue to decline at fairly rapid rates in areas that have older operators.

In more recent years, age distribution data for the entire farm labour force have become available from the labour force survey. Although these data have been available for an insufficient length of time to establish definite long-term trend characteristics, they reveal the tendency towards higher proportions in senior age groups in recent years. For example, males 45 years of age and over represented 37.0 per cent of all men in the farm labour force in 1951, but by 1958 their ratio had increased to 42.5 per cent of the total (Table 8).

Table 8 - The Agricultural Labour Force by Age and Sex, Canada, 1951-58

Male age groups						
Year	Total	14-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65 and Over
(Annual averages in thousands)						
1951	388	122	97	341	258	70
1952	828	110	91	321	243	63
1953	821	107	84	321	251	58
1954	845	111	81	329	262	62
1955	789	98	68	308	255	60
1956	741	87	62	278	249	65
1957	712	85	57	263	241	66
1958	673	84	53	250	228	58
(Percentage distribution)						
1951	100.0	13.7	10.9	38.4	29.1	7.9
1958	100.0	12.5	7.9	37.1	33.9	8.6
Female age groups						
Year	Total	14-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65 and Over
(Annual averages in thousands)						
1951	72	14	×	30	18	×
1952	64	13	×	25	17	×
1953	42	10	×	16	11	×
1954	39	×	×	16	×	×
1955	36	×	×	13	10	×
1956	40	×	×	15	10	×
1957	39	×	×	15	12	×
1958	52	×	×	22	16	×

SOURCE: Special tabulations from DBS Labour Force Surveys.

NOTE: Data include Newfoundland.

(×) Due to high sampling variabilities for smaller estimates, figures smaller than 10,000 are not shown

Another way of illustrating changes in age patterns is to compare the farm labour force decline by different age groups. Between 1951 and 1958, the number of males in the 14 to 44 age groups has declined from 560,000 to 387,000, or 30.9 per cent. During the same period, the number in the senior age groups of 45 years and over declined from 328,000 to 286,000, or by only 12.8 per cent. It is apparent from these data that the decline in the labour force has taken place primarily among the younger men who are able to adjust to other jobs and move out of the agricultural industry more easily than those who are 45 or older.

Due to the very small numbers in different age groups for females in the agricultural labour force, it is more difficult to reach significant conclusions on changes that are occurring. In general, however, it seems that there is the same tendency as exists among the men. The younger women tend to leave the farm labour force more readily than older women. Between 1951 and 1958, there was a decline from 52,000 to 35,000 among women in the age groups of 14 to 44 years. Among women 45 years of age and over there was a decline from 20,000 to 17,000 during the same period. Thus the relative decline was 32.7 per cent for women in younger age groups, compared with only 15.0 per cent for older women.

A comparison of the age distribution for males in the non-agricultural labour force with the distribution for those in agriculture shows noticeable differences in age characteristics. In 1958 males in the 25-44 age group represented 50.0 per cent of the non-agricultural labour force but only 37.1 per cent of the agricultural labour force (Table 9). On the other hand, 42.5 per cent of all males in the agricultural labour force were 45 or older, while only 31.9 per cent were 45 or more in the non-agricultural labour force.

Table 9 — Age Distribution of Males in the Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Labour Force, Canada, Annual Averages, 1958

Male age groups in thousands						
	Total	14-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65 & Over
Agricultural	673	84	53	250	228	58
Non-Agricultural	3,961	264	451	1,981	1,126	139
(Percentage distribution)						
Agricultural	100.0	12.5	7.9	37.1	33.9	8.6
Non-Agricultural	100.0	6.7	11.4	50.0	28.4	3.5

SOURCE: Special tabulations from DBS Labour Force Surveys.

NOTE: Data include Newfoundland.

The distribution of males in the two lowest age groups is very interesting in relation to the trend of labour out of agriculture. In the agricultural labour force the number in the 14 to 19 age group was considerably greater than the number in the 20 to 24 age group. In non-agriculture, however, there was a much smaller number in the 14 to 19 than in the 20 to 24 group. The larger proportion

of 14 to 19 year-olds in agriculture compared to non-agriculture can be explained by the fact that males begin to participate in farm work at a younger age than they do in other industries. But why, within the agricultural labour force, was the number of men aged 20 to 24 actually smaller than the number between the ages of 14 to 19? The "teenagers" include a large number of students who do not participate in the farm labour force during school months, and this group might therefore be expected to be smaller than the 20-24 group. The most feasible answer to this question is that the exodus from the agricultural labour force generally begins at about the ages of 20 to 24, when young men have finished school and have reached a sufficiently mature age to break away from the family farm and seek other employment.

The higher proportions in older age groups in the agricultural than in the non-agricultural labour force is again illustrated in Chart III. In 1958, 47.6 per cent of the non-agricultural labour force (both sexes) were between 25 to 44, and 26.7 per cent were 45 to 64 years of age. In the agricultural labour force, only 37.5 per cent of both sexes were between 25 and 44 but 33.6 per cent were 45 to 64 years of age. About 8 per cent of the men and women were 65 years old or above in the agricultural labour force, compared with only 3 per cent in the non-agricultural labour force.

The following examples of the surprising mobility of young men and women make it easier to understand the exodus of young people from the agricultural labour force. In 1941, there were 94,890 persons 10 to 14 years of age living in Saskatchewan. Ten years later there were only 62,613 persons 20 to 24 years of age remaining in the province. In British Columbia, in 1951, over one-half of the population 20 to 24 years of age was born elsewhere than in that province. Among those in this age group who had migrated to British Columbia close to 70 per cent became residents of urban areas.¹

Marital Status

Considering the trend away from agriculture among young people, it would be expected that a higher percentage than formerly of those remaining in agriculture would be married. The young people who remained there might also be expected to reflect the tendency towards marriage in younger age groups in recent years.

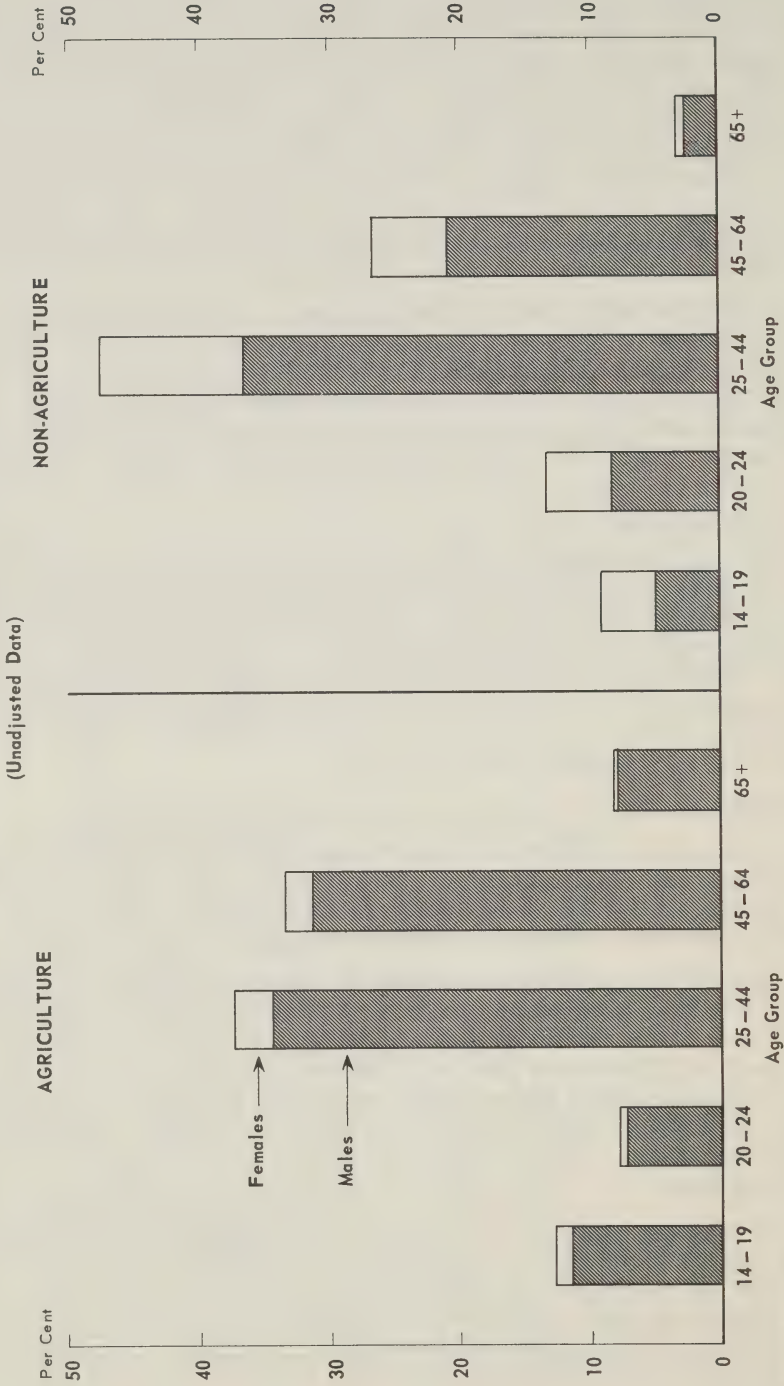
Labour force surveys, unfortunately, do not provide statistics on the marital status of male workers but information on the latter is available from censuses as will be seen below. For females, the labour force survey data for 1946 show that 54.2 per cent of those with jobs in agriculture were married. During corresponding survey months in 1958, the percentage of married women had increased to 66.7. It must be borne in mind, however, that these percentages pertain to only part of the total number of women living on farms, i.e., only those who participate in the labour force.

Census data on marital status for males "gainfully occupied" in agriculture, also show an increased percentage of married persons (Table 10). The proportion of single men declined from 44.7 per cent of the total in 1931, to 36.2 per cent in 1951. During the same period, the proportion of men who were married increased from 52.0 to 61.3 per cent.

¹ Both examples from Census of Canada, 1951 Vol. X, p. 222.

Chart III

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL AND NON-AGRICULTURAL LABOUR FORCE*
BY AGE GROUP AND SEX, CANADA, 1958



* Annual Averages

Source: DBS Labour Force Surveys

Table 10 — Marital Status of Males 14 Years of Age and Over Occupied in Agriculture, Canada, 1931-51

Year	Single	Married	Widowed and Divorced	Total
(Thousands of persons)				
1931	493(a)	573	37	1,103
1941	450	574	41	1,065
1951	289	489	20	798
(Percentage distribution)				
1931	44.7	52.0	3.3	100.0
1941	42.2	53.9	3.9	100.0
1951	36.2	61.3	2.5	100.0

SOURCES: Censuses of Canada, 1931, Vol. VII, Table 28; 1941, Vol. VII, Table 5; 1951, Vol. IV, Table 11.

(a) A small adjustment of 4,000 was made to data for the number of single males to delete those in the 10 — 13 age group, who, according to the 1931 census, represented 0.37 per cent of the total number of males in agricultural occupations.

NOTE: Data for 1951 include Newfoundland.

The marital status of farm workers is an important factor in relation to the supply of workers in the traditional framework of family farm ownership in Canada. Married workers normally have a desire to become established on their own farms, whereas single persons are more readily available to other established farmers. Therefore a noticeable decline in the ranks of unmarried workers, such as the above, has the effect of decreasing the supply of unattached and mobile workers in agriculture.

Employment Status

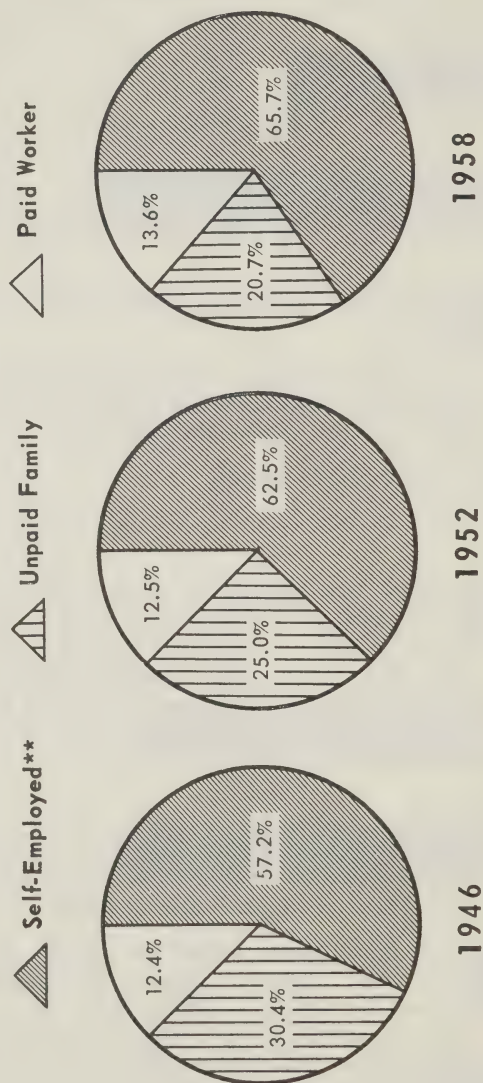
Analysis of the agricultural labour force by type of worker, that is, by self-employed operators, paid workers and unpaid family members, throws considerable light on the nature and direction of the declining trend in the farm labour force.

As already stated, farm operators form the largest group in the agricultural labour force. Unpaid family members are the second largest class and paid workers are a much smaller group. In 1946, there was an average of 679,000 self-employed workers or operators, and they represented 57.2 per cent of the total number of persons with jobs in agriculture. The balance was made up of 360,000 unpaid family members and 147,000 paid workers, who accounted for 30.4 and 12.4 per cent of the total (see Table 11 and Chart IV). During the years following 1946, however, although all types of workers have shown a decline in absolute numbers, the significant change has been the rapid decline in the unpaid family group. This group of workers dropped off 59.2 per cent between 1946 and 1958. During this same interval self-employed and paid workers declined by only 31.1 and 34.0 per cent, respectively.

Chart IV

TRENDS IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE BOTH SEXES, CANADA, 1946 - 58

(Total Persons with Jobs* equals 100%)



* Calculated from annual averages.
**Includes own account workers and employers.

Source: DBS Reference Paper No. 58, 1958 revision.

**Table 11 – Employment status of Workers in Agriculture, Both Sexes, Canada,
Annual Averages, 1946-58**

Year	Total	Self-employed Workers (a) (Thousands with Jobs)	Unpaid Family Members	Paid Workers
1946	1,186	679	360	147
1947	1,122	664	338	120
1948	1,096	668	295	133
1949	1,079	663	273	143
1950	1,018	628	279	111
1951	939	596	243	100
1952	891	557	223	111
1953	859	552	194	113
1954	878	572	185	121
1955	819	543	170	106
1956	776	514	160	102
1957	744	496	152	96
1958	712	468	147	97
Percentage Change				
1946-58	-40.0	-31.1	-59.2	-34.0

SOURCE: DBS Labour Force Surveys.

NOTE: Data for Newfoundland included from October, 1949.

(a) Includes both "own-account" and "employer" groups.

Unpaid workers accounted for only 20.7 per cent of all farm workers in 1958. ¹ In other words, only about one out of five farm workers were unpaid family members. It is probable that unpaid labour on farms is underestimated to some extent because the labour force surveys do not list persons under 14 years of age or females working less than 20 hours. Nevertheless, this surplus help does not materially alter the above comparison of the decline in the main source of unpaid family labour.

The number of unpaid female workers has dropped by a greater percentage than the number of unpaid males. The decline among unpaid female workers was from an average of 131,000 in 1946 to 35,000 in 1958. During the same period, the number of unpaid males dropped from 229,000 to 112,000.

On a regional basis, the decline in unpaid family workers was the highest in the Prairies. In the period 1946-58 unpaid workers dropped by 102,000 or by 65.0 per cent in this region (Table 12). In Ontario and Quebec unpaid workers declined by only about 50,000 in each province, although the relative decline of 63.5 per cent in Ontario was nearly equal to that of the Prairies. In 1958 un-

¹ In 1959, unpaid workers accounted for 19.1 per cent, paid workers 15.7, and self-employed workers 65.2 per cent of all persons with jobs in agriculture.

paid family workers constituted well under 20 per cent of the total with farm jobs in Ontario and in the Prairie provinces, while in Quebec unpaid workers still accounted for about one-third of all classes of workers.

The above data suggest that the traditional pattern of family farms is altering. The proportion of unpaid labour contributed by family members on farms has declined rapidly over a period of little more than a decade. The decline in this type of worker suggests that farmers are encountering increasing difficulty in retaining their sons and daughters on the farms in the face of increasing opportunities for paid employment elsewhere.

Table 12 — Self-Employed, Unpaid Family and Total Workers in Agriculture, Both Sexes, by Region, Annual Averages, 1946 and 1958

	Year	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
		(Thousands with jobs)				
Total all workers	1946	93	277	320	466	31
	1958	54	161	175	296	24
Self-employed	1946	58	145	190	268	19
	1958	33	92	110	214	17
Unpaid family	1946	23	105	74	157	2(a)
	1958	11	53	27	55	2
Percentage change 1946-58						
Total all workers		-41.9	-41.9	-45.3	-36.5	-22.6
Self-employed		-43.1	-36.6	-42.1	-20.2	-10.5
Unpaid family		-52.2	-49.5	-63.5	-65.0	0.0

SOURCE: Special tabulations from DBS Labour Force Surveys.

NOTE: Atlantic Region excludes Newfoundland.

(a) Small estimates are subject to a very high degree of error due to survey sampling variabilities.

3 – SEASONALITY OF EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE

The Pattern of Seasonal Variation

Employment in the agricultural industry is subject to a high degree of seasonal variation. The peak activity occurs during the harvest season in August, and the trough or lowest activity period normally occurs in February. The climate throughout Canada is generally coldest during the latter month and outdoor farm activity is hindered considerably. Thus, the extreme Canadian climate is the principal factor that produces wide fluctuations in employment.

Seasonal variations in agricultural employment should be considered as distinct from the long-term decline in the farm labour force. Yet, indirectly, seasonality probably contributes to the secular downward trend because of the less attractive income prospects in an industry in which many enterprises are virtually idle for four or five months each year.

During the six years from 1953 to 1958 inclusive, the total number of persons with jobs in agriculture averaged an estimated 703,000 during the month of February, but increased to an average of 946,000 in August. During these years, therefore, the number of persons employed in the peak month of August was more than one-third higher than in the slack period in February. This means that about 240,000 persons were seasonal employees.

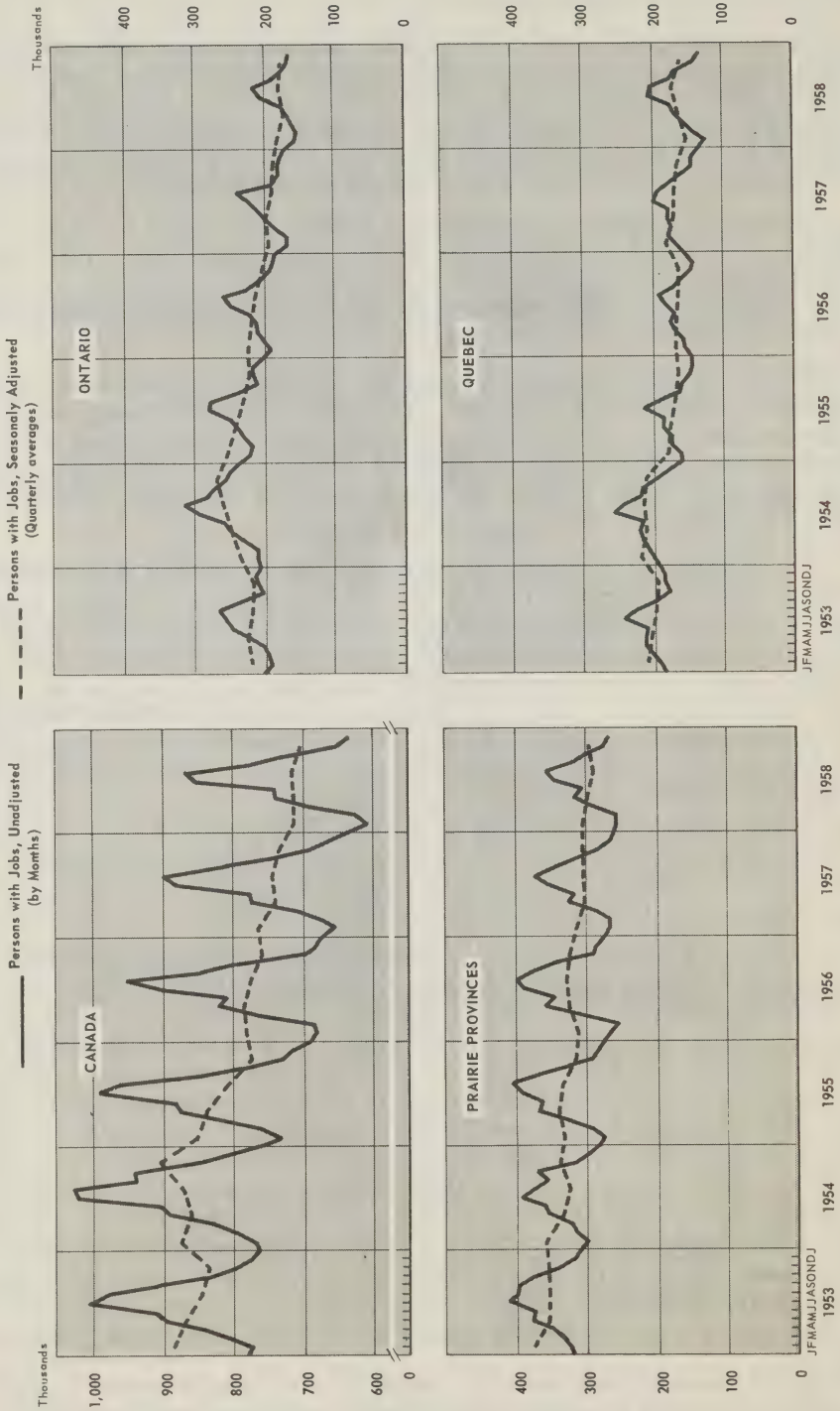
For Canada as a whole, the seasonal pattern in farm employment is as follows: from February, there is a gradual increase in the number of persons with jobs in March, followed by a rapid increase in April and May until spring crop seeding is completed (Chart V). Employment then remains stable to the middle of June, but picks up very rapidly from June to July, as the hay and early crop harvesting begin. From July to August employment increases more slowly, but usually reaches its peak in the latter month. From the peak in July or August, employment drops sharply in September and October, reflecting the exodus of seasonal labour when only minor operations such as late harvesting and fall tillage and seeding operations are in process. By November, most of the seasonal employees are out of the farm labour force and the level of employment declines very gradually through November, December and January, reaching its trough or low point again in February.

As may be expected, seasonal employment variations in agriculture differ somewhat in different Canadian regions. In the three Prairie provinces the shorter frost-free growing season makes it necessary to speed up the spring crop seeding operations. As a result of this the number of persons with farm jobs reaches a semi-peak in May (Chart V), showing a slight cut-back in June after seeding is completed.¹ Agricultural employment in Quebec also shows a slight spurt in May. But in Ontario the seasonal pattern is different—employment continues to rise until June. From June, agricultural employment rises rapidly in all regions until it reaches its peak. In the three Maritime provinces, Quebec and British Columbia, the peak of farm employment is usually reached in July with a slight decline by August. In Ontario and the Prairie provinces peak employment does not normally occur until August. After the peak period is over employment in most of the provinces usually declines towards the trough period even more rapidly than it rises. In Quebec and British Columbia the trough of employment

¹ It is not pretended that these descriptions of the timing of seasonal patterns are exact, as labour force data only cover employment activity for weekly periods on or near the middle of each month.

Chart V

SEASONAL VARIATION OF AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT IN CANADA, PRAIRIE PROVINCES ONTARIO AND QUEBEC, 1953-58



Source: DBS Labour Force Surveys

normally occurs in January, while in other provinces the trough month is usually February.

The seasonal indexes (showing the seasonal change from month to month) for agricultural employment in different provinces reveal differences in seasonality in quantitative terms (see Table E, Appendix B). Comparing those regions which employ the majority of the farm labour force, that is, Quebec, Ontario and the Prairies, the highest seasonal variation in employment is found in Ontario and the Prairie region. From 1953 to 1958, the average amplitude of seasonal employment variations was 34.9 per cent for persons with farm jobs in both Ontario and the Prairie provinces.¹ During the same period, the average amplitude for persons with farm jobs in Canada as a whole was 33.4 per cent. In Quebec the average amplitude was 32.6 per cent.

Seasonal indexes indicate that the amplitude of employment variation is increasing in agriculture. For Canada as a whole, the seasonal amplitude of persons with jobs in agriculture has risen steadily from 31.2 per cent in 1953-54 to 36.0 per cent in 1957-58. Increased seasonality in agricultural employment can probably be credited to the increase in farm mechanization. The use of more machinery aids farmers to get their seeding and harvesting done more quickly and after peak seasons are over they require less year-round help.

Differences in regional patterns of agricultural employment are rather interesting. In the Prairie provinces seasonal employment indexes are usually well over 100 per cent for the six months from May to October each year, while in Ontario and Quebec the seasonal indexes reach 100 or more per cent for only 4 or 5 months of the year. In other words, the seasonal curve of agricultural employment is somewhat flatter during the peak employment period in the Prairies than the comparable patterns of employment in Ontario and Quebec. Again, during the slack period of employment in the winter, seasonal indexes for the Prairie provinces fall below 90 per cent for 4 months while in Ontario and Quebec these low indexes are only experienced for 2 to 3 months each year.

Compared with the high seasonal swing of over 30 percentage points in agricultural employment, non-farm employment in Canada has a seasonal swing from peak to trough of only about 5 percentage points. Despite the high degree of seasonality in agricultural employment, however, labour force surveys consistently show that very few persons become unemployed in this industry. The principal reasons for this are, first, that over 85 per cent of the agricultural labour force consists of self-employed farm operators and unpaid family members, many of whom leave the labour force entirely during off-seasons of the year, and secondly, a number of seasonal workers in agriculture seek employment in other industries rather than in agriculture during the slack months of the year.

Seasonal Employment Among Women and Young Workers

It is possible to estimate the source of a considerable portion of the seasonal workers in agriculture by examining the numbers and characteristics of male and female workers during peak and trough periods of the year. It has been shown above that during the 1953-58 period the number of seasonal employees in agriculture averaged about 240,000 persons (the difference between the average number employed at the peak in August and at the trough in February during this six-year

¹ The amplitude of seasonal employment variations is the difference between peak and trough employment when both are expressed in terms of seasonal indexes. The wide amplitudes in agriculture reflect a large percentage of seasonal workers to all workers in the industry.

period). About 50,000 of these seasonal workers were females and the remaining 190,000 were males.¹

Among females, 32,000 of the seasonal employees were unpaid family workers so it may be concluded that female seasonal workers are principally housewives and other family members who participate in the farm labour force mainly during peak seasons of the year. Among males seasonality is not confined to any one class of worker but occurs among self-employed farm operators as well as among family members and paid workers. On the 190,000 seasonal male workers during the period 1953-58, there was an average of 72,000 self-employed men, 55,000 unpaid family members and 63,000 paid workers.

An analysis of males in the farm labour force by age groups, however, shows that there are more seasonal workers between the ages of 14 and 19 than in any other group. This is illustrated in Chart VI, which shows the seasonal pattern of males by age group during 1958. In the 1953-58 period there were 75,000 more workers in this group, on the average, during August survey dates than at February dates. Seasonality in this age group is no doubt related to movements in and out of the labour force of boys who are still attending school. Adding the group of 75,000 males, who are seasonal workers primarily because of school attendance, to the group of over 30,000 unpaid females who would be mainly occupied in farm housework, it seems feasible to conclude that approximately 100,000 of the seasonal workers during the period under review were persons who dropped out of the labour force entirely after peak seasons of farm work were completed.

From the above, it is clear that the high degree of seasonality in agriculture is not as serious as would appear on the surface because possibly as much as 40 per cent of the seasonal workers in the industry do not seek employment elsewhere when they leave the farm labour force. To some extent, therefore, the family nature of the agricultural labour force provides a sort of "built-in" flexibility which helps it to adjust to the high degree of seasonality in the industry.

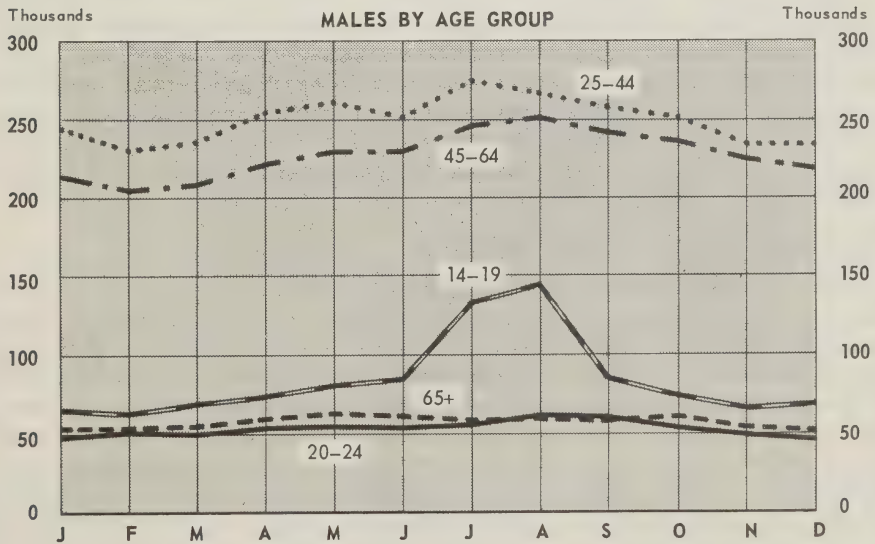
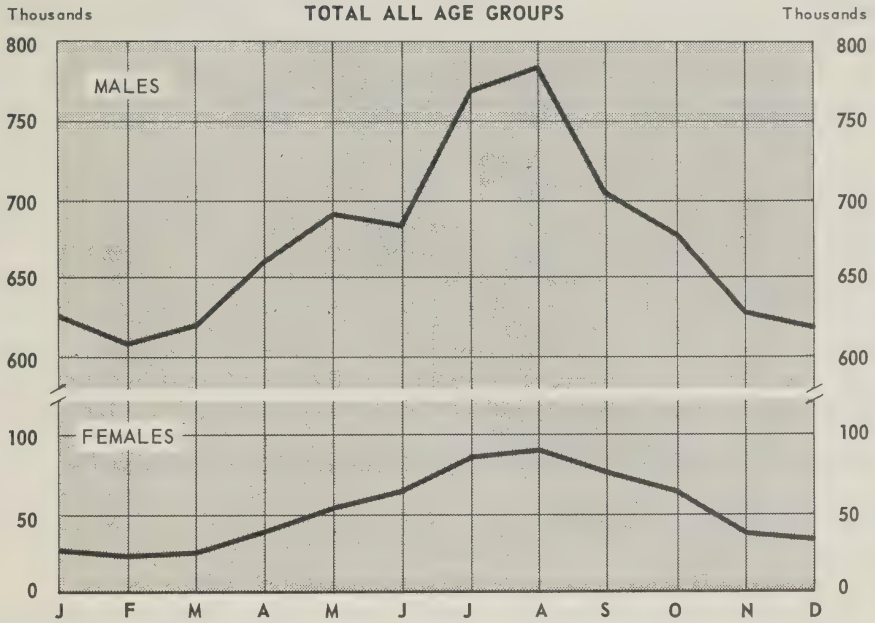
Seasonality and Hours of Work

There is another aspect to the recurring seasonal peak and trough periods in agriculture that is sufficiently important to warrant some study. This is the wide variation in the number of weekly hours that farm workers put in during different seasons of the year. The largest portion - over 85 per cent - of the agricultural labour force is composed of self-employed operators and unpaid family members who maintain their own hours of work and can choose to remain on their farms despite recurring seasons of peak and minimum activity. With this great flexibility in hours worked there is no doubt that a more realistic measurement of the seasonal variation in agricultural employment should consider time worked as well as the total number of persons working. In Table 13 a comparison is made of the hours worked during February and August months for males employed in agriculture from 1953-58. During peak periods in August, the number of men working 55 hours or more per week is very much higher than the number working the same hours during February periods. The number working these long hours

¹ Variations in female employment in agriculture are very great in relation to the small number of them in the labour force. In the six years from 1953 to 1958 the number of females with jobs averaged only 20,000 during February months but increased to an average of 72,000 during August months.

Chart VI

SEASONAL PATTERN OF LABOUR FORCE IN AGRICULTURE BY SEX AND AGE GROUP, CANADA, 1958



in August averaged 240 per cent higher than in February. During the peak months of August about 69 per cent of all males with jobs worked 55 hours or more. During the February trough months, men worked much shorter hours and only 37 per cent were in the 55-hour or more bracket.

Table 13 — Males Employed in Agriculture by Hours Worked in Peak and Trough Months, Canada, Six-Year Averages, 1953-58

1953-58, 6-Year Averages	Total	0-34(a) hours	35-44 hours	45-54 hours	55+ hours
(Thousands with jobs)					
Of yearly totals	757	44	110	189	414
In August	874	29	84	157	604
In February	683	62	154	216	251
Per cent working in August relative to February	127.9	46.8	54.8	72.7	240.6

SOURCE: DBS Labour Force Surveys.

(a) Persons working less than 35 hours per week are classed as part-time workers.

NOTE: Data include Newfoundland.

The hours worked on farms during different seasons is an important area of study because it provides one method of measuring the extent of "under-employment" that remains in agriculture. ¹ For example, the number of men not working, or working only part-time hours (those in the 0 to 34 hours group) averaged about 9 per cent of the total males with jobs in agriculture during the February trough months from 1953-58. This area of study is one that requires a more cautious approach, however, because the data on hours of work as reported by farm workers is probably considerably less accurate than comparable data for other industries in which regular hours are stipulated.

Seasonality In Relation to Other Industries

A recent study made by the Department of Labour provides some indication of the extent of seasonal employment in agriculture in relation to total seasonal employment in Canada. This study shows that in the 1958-1959 period there were between 500,000 and 600,000 seasonal jobs in all industries in Canada. Of this total, some 250,000 were seasonal jobs in the agricultural industry. ² It has been stated above that many of the seasonal workers in agriculture do not seek employment in other industries because some remain on farms doing housework while others return to school after the peak seasons are over. However, farm workers who do seek employment in non-agricultural industries tend to aggravate the

¹ "Underemployment" occurs in agriculture in cases where people continue to remain on farms even though they are not fully occupied.

² **Seasonal Unemployment in Canada**, Economics and Research Branch, Department of Labour, Ottawa, 1959, pp. 3,9.

unemployment situation because they must find work during winter months when seasonal employment is lowest. On the other hand, during the summer months when agriculture makes its peak demand for workers it is very difficult to attract them away from other industries, because the demand in agriculture comes at a time when most of the other industries, particularly those engaged in outdoor activities, also require their peak number of employees.

Placement of Seasonal and Other Farm Workers

To assist farmers to obtain seasonal workers during peak work seasons, government and other agencies promote movements of farm workers to areas in which the local labour supplies are inadequate. Interprovincial movements of harvest workers within Canada, as well as international movements between Canada and the U.S.A., have been organized through the co-operation of governments and other agencies for many years. In 1896 the railway companies first sponsored movements of grain harvesters from Eastern Canada to the Prairies. At about the same time, there were annual inter-changes of maple sugar harvesters between the United States and Eastern Canada. The sugar workers migrated between Quebec, Maine and Vermont.

Organized interprovincial and intraprovincial movements of farm workers in Canada have been conducted on a fairly large scale. The oldest and largest movement was the grain harvest migration from Eastern Canada to the Prairies. In 1920 the governments of the three Prairie provinces began to organize harvest excursions operating through the federal Employment Service. The railway companies, which had sponsored the movement from 1896 to 1919, were given the responsibility of recruiting workers and providing transportation. In 1925 the grain harvest movement to the Prairies reached a peak of 45,400 persons. With the onset of the depression in 1930, however, the harvesting movement was discontinued until 1942, when it commenced again under the administration of the National Selective Service.

The Department of Labour at this time initiated the Dominion-Provincial Farm Labour Program to direct the movements of farm workers. This program has been carried on under essentially the same arrangement since 1942. In addition to grain harvesting movements, the Farm Labour Program has organized hay harvesting movements to assist farmers in Ontario, and various other movements such as fruit picking in British Columbia. Under the Farm Labour Program, federal-provincial agreements have been arranged with all provinces except Newfoundland. The Program is a joint responsibility of the federal Department of Labour and provincial Departments of Agriculture. It receives the co-operation of other government departments and various associations, including the National Employment Service, the federal Departments of Agriculture, Citizenship and Immigration, representatives of farmers such as the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and representatives of the two major railways. In addition, the co-operation of the U.S. Department of Labor expedites the placement of temporary farm workers moving into the United States or into Canada.

Under the Farm Labour Program, in all organized movements where special transportation arrangements are made, the railway companies have offered reduced fares, the workers pay a nominal part and the federal and provincial governments share the balance of the fares. The latter is the main financial expenditure incurred in assisting farm labour movements.

In addition to the organized movements under the Federal-Provincial Farm Labour Program, local area farm placements are made by the National Employ-

ment Service. The National Employment Service co-operates with Federal-Provincial Farm Labour committees to ensure that all local sources of labour are utilized before outside workers are moved into any particular area.

The international migration of maple sugar harvesters between Canada and the United States has continued, with various additional movements being added or discontinued from time to time. One of these was the movement of combine harvesting crews which took place principally between the Prairie provinces and mid-western and southern states during the 1940's. Another is the migration of potato pickers from New Brunswick and Quebec to Maine, which has continued since 1931 and has provided seasonal work during current years for 6,000 to 6,500 persons. A third movement which is still continuing is the migration of experienced tobacco harvesters from the United States to Ontario and Quebec. In 1956 and 1957 about 4,000 workers assisted in this harvest each year. The above, and other smaller international movements of temporary farm workers, have been organized under reciprocal agreements between the governments of Canada and the United States.

In recent years the increased trend towards specialty crops, such as sugar beets in Quebec, Ontario and Alberta and fruit and berry crops in British Columbia, Ontario and Nova Scotia, has led to new types of demands for seasonal farm help. The pattern of seasonal worker requirements appears to be altering from an emphasis on the harvesting of grain and hay to newer specialty crops. During 1958 and 1959 no organized movements of harvesters from the East to the Prairie provinces were required. One of the principal reasons for this change is the increased use of labour-saving harvest machinery for grain crops. Newly-introduced specialty crops, however, still require a considerable amount of hand labour.

In the past five years from 1954 to 1958 inclusive, organized interprovincial and international movements have included a total of 62,000 farm workers.¹ Of this total about 11,000 were Canadian workers moving from one province to another, 37,000 were Canadian workers moving to the United States, and 14,000 were American workers moving into Canada.

With increasing mechanization in agricultural production, there has been an overall reduction in the demand for seasonal farm labour in recent years. Increased mechanization, however, has resulted in a much greater demand for skilled labour, with the result that there are still problems to be faced in the placement of farm workers. In the past several years, for example, there has been a constant demand for skilled dairy workers which has been difficult to meet.

¹ Department of Labour *Annual Reports*, Ottawa, 1953-57, and information from the Unemployment Insurance Commission, Ottawa, 1958-59.

4 – CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE

Labour Legislation

Since the Canadian farm labour force is mainly composed of self-employed operators and members of their families, little formal attention has been given to the regulation of farm working conditions. The interests of farm organizations have been mainly centred in the production and marketing fields, and practically no attempts have been made to form farm labour unions which could bargain with employers in the interest of better conditions for hired workers.¹

Historically, labour legislation in Canada, as in other countries, was designed to regulate working conditions of employees in non-agricultural industries.² This seems understandable, since relations between employee and employer are much more impersonal in large incorporated firms and regular conditions of work are required more than they are on farms, most of which have only one or a few hired men.

Nevertheless, there is growing concern in Canada and in the United States over the need for improvement of agricultural working conditions. Because of the increase in mechanization, farmers require workers with a higher degree of skill and responsibility. This demand can only be met by making the wage earners' employment conditions more attractive.

At present, there is virtually no legislation regulating agricultural employment conditions. Although some of the provincial labour standards have been extended to cover general employment, they have not been applied to agricultural workers. Employees in non-agricultural industries in Canada have received the benefit directly or indirectly of legislation³ in respect to some or all of the following employment conditions:

1. Minimum age for employment.
2. Minimum wages as applicable to either experienced or inexperienced workers.
3. Maximum hours of work per day and per week.
4. Pay for overtime at the rate of 1½ times the regular or minimum rate.
5. A weekly rest day and statutory provision concerning public holidays.
6. Annual vacations with pay.
7. Equal pay for men and women doing the same work in the same establishment.
8. Workmen's compensation.
9. Benefits under the federal Unemployment Insurance Act of Canada.

¹ See: G.V. Haythorne, *Land and Labour*, published for McGill University, Oxford University Press, 1941, pp. 363-364.

² See: *Farm Labour Fact Book*, U.S. Department of Labor, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., p. 96.

³ Legislation with respect to labour standards in most industries is under the jurisdiction of provincial governments, and there are differences in standards in different provinces.

In addition to legislative provisions, many non-agricultural workers receive other fringe benefits such as employers' contributions to voluntary group life insurance and pension plans.

Of the above benefits, workmen's compensation is the only one for which provisions have been made covering agricultural workers. In most provinces, however, compensation is available only upon application of farm employers and the extent of coverage granted to farm workers has been very small. Thus, except to a limited extent, farm employees have recourse only through court action for damages arising out of employment accidents.

Again, although no minimum age has been established for employment in agriculture in Canada, compulsory school attendance laws restrict the employment of children under 14 to 16 years of age during the school term.¹ In most provinces, however, children 12 years of age and over may be kept out of school to help with farm work for 4 to 6 weeks of the school year.² Furthermore, during school holidays or after regular school hours, there is nothing to prohibit child labour on farms except the judgment of parents or farm operators.

Very little published information is available on employment conditions in agriculture. A survey of farm labour problems on 320 farms in Ontario in 1952, showed that both farm operators and hired labourers were in close agreement on certain working conditions which they felt were important.³ Both farmers and their employees placed what appeared to be the three most important factors in the following order:

1. reasonable and regular hours,
2. good food and living quarters,
3. good wages.

Factual evidence such as the above indicates that conditions of employment in agriculture cannot be judged on the merits of any one factor, such as the salary paid, because other conditions are important as well.

As already stated, there has been increased interest in improving agricultural employment conditions in both Canada and the United States during recent years. The U.S. Secretary of Labor, James P. Mitchell, has given strong support to the need for minimum wage and maximum hour regulations in agriculture, implying that reform may be required through legislation if it does not evolve voluntarily through farm employer organizations or by other means.⁴ In Canada, agricultural employment conditions have been receiving more attention by farm organizations, by farm labour committees of federal and provincial governments and by the federal Department of Labour.⁵

¹ Provincial Labour Standards, Department of Labour, Legislation Branch, Ottawa, October 1958, p. 4.

² International Labour Conventions of the I L O have established 14 as the minimum age in agriculture.

³ S.H. Lane and D.R. Campbell, *Farm Labour in Ontario*, Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, Ontario, 1952, p. 62.

⁴ In his address to the National Conference of Farm Labor Services, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A., February 23, 1959.

⁵ In 1955, the Department of Labour prepared a bulletin entitled "Working and Living Conditions in Agriculture". The bulletin was published by the Queen's Printer, Ottawa.

As already noted, most of the workers in non-agricultural industries in Canada have received the benefits extended under the federal Unemployment Insurance Act, which was first introduced on a national basis in 1941. So far, agricultural employment is not included under the Act. Farmers and farm workers do, however, benefit from other general welfare schemes, such as the national Old Age Security Act and provincial hospital insurance programs.

Hours of Work

Although many farm workers may work a short year, they generally put in much longer hours during the day or week than workers in non-agricultural industries. For most workers in other industries, labour standards legislation and union agreements have provided shorter hours of work. In 1958, for example, workers in the non-agricultural labour force put in an average of 40 hours per week, compared with 54 hours for workers in agriculture.¹

The large difference between weekly hours in agriculture and non-agricultural industries is due mainly to the fact that farm workers still put in at least six days of work per week, while a large proportion of the workers in non-agricultural industries work a five-day, 40-hour week. For example, in the manufacturing industry, in April 1958, 88 per cent of the non-office employees and 93 per cent of the office employees worked in establishments in which the five-day work week was standard.²

In addition to the general pattern of shorter hours in non-agricultural industries, statutory holidays cut down some of the work weeks of non-agricultural workers.

Farmers have, of course, been able to enjoy somewhat shorter hours as more labour-saving machinery has become available over the past few decades. It has been estimated that hours worked by persons with jobs in agriculture have declined from an average of about 64 per week in 1926, to about 52 in 1950. Since 1951, however, the hours of work have shown a slight increase again. Labour force surveys also show that in recent years slightly higher percentages of male farm workers are working 55 hours or more per week (see Table F, Appendix B).

The number of female workers in agriculture is so small that sampling variations in labour force survey data preclude definite interpretations for sub-classifications on hours worked. Generally, however, labour force survey data show that during the past few years there has been a trend towards somewhat longer hours for females similar to that shown for male workers.

Wages

As far as it is possible to make meaningful comparisons of wages paid to hired farm workers with those paid to workers in other industries, it may be concluded that farm wages are still relatively low. An estimate of average farm wages in Canada and the provinces is made three times a year, in January, May and August, by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. These rates do not provide absolute measures of wage scales, which may differ as a result of differences in age and skill, but they are useful as a guide to wage trends. From these data, it is apparent that farm wages have increased substantially

¹ Unpublished estimates by Department of Trade and Commerce, Economics Branch, July 1959.

² *Working Conditions in Canada, 1958*, p. 4., Economics and Research Branch, Department of Labour, Ottawa.

since the early 1940's. In August 1941, the average male farm help wage, with board, was \$35.00 per month. In August 1958 it was \$120.00. ¹ This increase over the years has been relatively greater than those in some of the other industries. In the manufacturing industry, for example, employees received average earnings of \$26.18 per week in August 1941, and \$72.62 per week in August 1958. ²

Despite this increase over the years, however, farm wages are generally lower than wages even for unskilled labourers in other industries. A comparison of hourly wages for male farm help with those for unskilled male labourers in meat packing, dairy products, sawmill and construction occupations in 1958 (Table 14) shows that farm wages are generally 10 to 50 per cent below those of workers in these occupations. It should be noted, however, that, although the occupations selected as examples in Table 14 are those in which farm workers might find employment, the comparison is made for wages which do not include board and lodging. As relatively few hired farm employees work without board provided to them, the net position of the farm helpers is a good deal more favourable than that revealed by the comparison of money wages alone. On the other hand, the rates for farm help are those for the month of August when farm wages normally reach their peak. During most other months, farm rates would compare slightly less favourably.

¹ **Farm Wages in Canada**, DBS, Ottawa.

² **Employment and Payrolls**, September 1941 and September 1958, D B S, Ottawa.

Table 14—Wages of Male Farm Help Compared With Those of Unskilled Labourers in Selected Occupations, by Provinces, 1958 (a)

Province	Farm Help	Slaughtering and Meat	Dairy	Sawmills	Construction (b)
		Packing	Products		
		(Average per hour without board)			
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Prince Edward Island		-	-	-	.85
Nova Scotia	.73(c)	-	.99	.78	1.37
New Brunswick		-	.77	.87	1.05
Quebec	.88	1.55	1.16	.97	1.30
Ontario	1.03	1.65	1.51	1.14	1.30
Manitoba	1.00	1.69	1.16	-	1.25
Saskatchewan	1.09	1.54	1.18	-	1.35
Alberta	1.05	1.67	1.37	1.09	1.35
British Columbia	1.14	1.73	1.73	1.70	1.95

SOURCES: DBS Quarterly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics, July to September 1959, Table 2; and Wage Rates, Salaries and Hours of Labour, Department of Labour, 1958, Tables 7, 8, 36, 70.

(a) Farm rates for August 1958. All others are for October 1958.

(b) Prevailing rates for building and structures at Charlottetown, P.E.I.; Halifax, N.S.; Fredericton, N.B.; Sherbrooke, Que.; Guelph, Ont.; Brandon, Man.; Prince Albert, Sask.; Lethbridge, Alta.; and Vancouver, B.C. In most provinces these rates were lower than prevailing rates in larger urban centres.

(c) Average rate for P.E.I., N.S. and N.B.

— Indicates no rate available.

In New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario, employment in forestry still provides supplementary employment opportunities for farm workers. For logging occupations, data on wage rates, both with and without board, show that wages available in alternative forestry occupations are higher than farm rates (Table 15).

Table 15 — Wages of Male Farm Help Compared With Those of Selected Logging Occupations in New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario, 1958

Province	Logging Occupations ^(a)					
	Farm Help (b)		Choppers and Cutters		Truck Drivers	
	With Board	Without Board	With Board	Without Board	With Board	Without Board
	(average per day)					
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
New Brunswick	5.00(c)	6.00(c)	6.59	8.13	7.23	9.53
Quebec	5.60	7.30	-	8.85	9.07	10.11
Ontario	6.10	8.00	8.85	9.03	-	13.60

SOURCES: DBS Quarterly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics, July to September 1959, Table 3; and *Wage Rates, Salaries and Hours of Labour*, 1958, Table 1.

(a) Rates are for time workers. Piece-workers' earnings are higher than those shown here.

(b) Farm rates for August 1958. All others are for October 1958.

(c) These rates are for P.E.I., N.S. and N.B.

There would seem to be little doubt, therefore, that low wages for hired farm help have been partly responsible for the failure to attract or retain a higher proportion of hired workers in the agricultural labour force. However, the foregoing review of other aspects of working conditions in agriculture leads to the conclusion that quite a number of other factors will also merit attention if farm employers find it necessary to attract larger numbers of hired workers in the future.

This does not imply that working conditions in Canadian agriculture have not improved over the past few decades. The introduction of modern-day machinery such as the farm tractor has shortened the hours and lessened the amount of physical exertion in farm work significantly. However, there is still no guaranteed assurance that these gains will be fairly and equally extended to all farm workers.

Although the foregoing analysis leads to the conclusion that employment conditions in agriculture are less favourable than those in most other industries, farm workers do have certain advantages over other workers. For example, a farm employee on a monthly or annual salary basis is normally assured of his board and lodging in the event of sickness or incapacity to work for other reasons. An urban worker, on the other hand, must continue to pay his rent and food bills and may be less economically secure than the farm worker, even though he may receive unemployment insurance benefits. In addition, farm workers usually acquire a greater variety of semi-skilled training than many workers in other industries, particularly those who work in assembly-line plants or other similar operations. Finally, practical farm work offers the best training for young men who have chosen farming as a career and hope to eventually take over the operation of their own farms.

5 – TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FARM POPULATION

Farm Population and the Size of Farm Families

An interesting development in the period under study has been the much steeper decline in the farm labour force than in the farm population. During the 25-year interval between 1931 and 1956, the number of persons with jobs in agriculture dropped by about 33 per cent, while the total farm population declined by only 17 per cent. ¹

Two main factors account for the more rapid decline in the farm labour force. First, the decline in the farm population has been more rapid among persons in working age groups than among children and older persons. Secondly, an increasing number of persons resident on farms are taking off-farm jobs, particularly those living in the more industrialized regions of the two central provinces. In 1955, for example, 130,000 Canadian farm operators reported non-farm work. Of this total, 72,000 resided in Ontario and Quebec. ²

On a regional basis, changes in the farm population have varied considerably (Table 16). The greatest declines have occurred in Ontario, and the Maritime and Prairie provinces. In Quebec the farm population increased between 1931 and 1941, and declines that have taken place since then have been just sufficient to bring the population back to a slightly lower level in 1956 than in 1931. In British Columbia a gain in farm population between 1941 and 1951 was sufficient to give this region a net increase over the entire period between 1931 and 1956. During this 25-year interval, the total decline in farm population in Canada was about 550,000. Nearly 80 per cent of this decline occurred in the Maritime and Prairie regions, and the remaining 20 per cent occurred in Ontario.

¹ The number of persons with jobs in agriculture was 1,216,000 in 1931, and 819,000 in 1956, according to labour force estimates made at dates nearest June 1. Agricultural censuses show the farm population at 3,289,140 in 1931, and 2,746,755 in 1956.

² *Census of Agriculture, 1956, Bulletin 2, Table 14.*

Table 16 — Changes in the Canadian Farm Population, by Regions, 1931-56

Year	Canada	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(Farm population in thousands)						
1931	3,289	413	777	801	1,196	102
1941	3,152	359	839	704	1,148	102
1951	2,892	312	793	703	964	120
1956	2,734	271	766	683	901	113
(Numerical change thousands)						
1931-41	- 137	- 54	+ 62	- 97	- 48	-
1941-51	- 260	- 47	- 46	- 1	- 184	+ 18
1951-56	- 158	- 41	- 27	- 20	- 63	- 7
1931-56	- 555	- 142	- 11	- 118	- 295	+ 11
(Percentage change)						
1931-56	-16.9	-34.4	-1.4	-14.7	-24.7	+10.8

SOURCE: Census of Canada, 1956, Bulletin 2-11, Table 1.

NOTE: Data for Newfoundland, Yukon and Northwest Territories not included.

The size of farm families is also of prime importance in relation to population trends. Census statistics show that farm families are larger, on the average, than rural non-farm and urban families. In 1956 farm families averaged 4.5 persons in size, compared with averages of 4.1 and 3.6 persons for rural non-farm and urban families, respectively. While young people from farm families tend to leave home at earlier age, a factor that would contribute towards smaller farm families, the higher birth rate prevailing in rural areas is sufficient to more than offset this tendency.¹

Although farm families are generally larger than urban families in all parts of Canada, there is considerable variation in the size of farm families in different provinces. In 1956 the average size of farm families in Quebec was 5.7 persons. In most of the provinces about two-thirds of the farm families consisted of two to four persons. In Quebec, however, over half of the farm families were larger than this and nearly 26 per cent consisted of eight or more persons. In other provinces large farm families were not nearly as predominant. In Ontario and all provinces west of Ontario, only 5 to 6 per cent of the farm families included eight or more persons (Table 17).

As far as the farm enterprise is concerned, the large farm family no longer has the economic advantage that it had in the past. The increasing tendency to substitute machinery for hand labour should, in fact, provide an incentive for smaller families. There are, of course, varying situations, as some types of farming require more cheap manual labour than others. However, the factors that contribute to large families on many farms today are more likely to be the same low educational and living standards consistently found among the largest families in urban areas.

¹ Census of Canada 1951, Vol. X, p. 311.

Table 17 — Percentage Distribution of Canadian Farm Families by Number of Persons per Family and by Regions, 1956

Number of Persons per Family (a)	Canada	Atlantic Region(b)	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(Percentage distribution)						
Two — four	63.0	61.1	43.0	68.6	64.3	66.5
Five — seven	27.0	26.5	31.4	25.7	30.0	28.7
Eight or more	10.0	12.4	25.6	5.7	5.7	4.8
(Average number in all farm families)						
	4.5	4.5	5.7	4.0	4.1	4.0

SOURCE: Census of Canada, 1956, Bulletin 1-16, Table 44.

(a) A family consists of a husband and wife with or without children who have never married, or a parent with one or more children never married, living together in the same dwelling.

(b) Including Newfoundland.

Farm Residents with Off-Farm Jobs

As stated above in the section dealing with population, the declining trend in the agricultural labour force is by no means a result of the off-farm population movement alone. Although information on the numbers of farm people who have continued to reside on farms but have taken off-farm work is limited, there is reason to believe that there has been a substantial increase in the number of farm residents who engage in off-farm work.

According to the 1941 Census of Agriculture, off-farm earnings were equal to nearly 11 per cent of cash farm income for the year 1940. ¹ The 1951 census did not collect data on the amount of money earned, but the number of farm operators who reported time spent in off-farm work during 1950 represented nearly 28 per cent of all operators reporting to the census. Of 172,000 operators reporting off-farm employment, 92,000 worked 97 days or more off the farm during the year.

In 1956, of 575,015 farm operators reporting to the quinquennial census, 129,633 or 22.5 per cent reported they were engaged in non-farm work during 1955. Those reporting non-farm work, spent an average of 6.6 months working in off-farm activities. The total months of non-farm work put in by farm operators was nearly 860,000, which would be the equivalent of over 70,000 man — years.

In 1958, labour force surveys conducted in February, May, August, and November showed that among farm residents ² 14 years of age and over, an

¹ Off-farm earnings include labour earnings of farm operators, hired labour and family members. Cash farm income includes sales of farm products and supplementary payments made under the Prairie Farm Assistance Act.

² Residents of farm according to the census definition of a farm. The census of 1956 defines a farm as being three acres or more in size, or one acre or more provided it has annual commercial sales of \$250 or above.

average of 930,000 had jobs in the labour force. ¹ Of these, 272,000 or 29 per cent worked in non-agricultural industries and 658,000 worked in agriculture.

These data also indicate that many residents of farms are employed in non-agricultural industries throughout the year. During the peak season of farm employment in August, it would be expected that the number of farm residents with non-farm jobs would decline. The labour force surveys in 1958 showed, however, that the number of farm people with jobs in non-agricultural industries actually increased in August. During the latter month the number employed in non-agricultural jobs, including both males and females, was 114 per cent of average employment in non-agricultural jobs during the year. The increase in the number of farm residents employed in agriculture in August was not much greater, at 118 per cent of the average for the year.

A separation of these data on farm residents into male and female groups, showed that a higher number of females held jobs in non-agricultural industries than in agriculture. Of the total number of farm women employed in the labour force during four months in 1958, 62 per cent had off-farm jobs. Among farm men, 24 per cent of those working had non-farm occupations.

In addition to farm residents, there were people living in towns and cities who worked in agriculture. However, the number of urban residents working on farms was much smaller than the number of farm residents who worked at off-farm jobs. During the four months of February, May, August and November in 1958, an average of 59,000 non-farm residents had jobs in agriculture. Adding this group to farm residents with jobs in agriculture, the total number of persons with farm jobs averaged 717,000. ² From this it may be seen that about 8 per cent of the total number of people employed in agriculture were non-farm residents.

These non-farm residents entered the agricultural labour force principally during the peak seasons of the year. During February 1958, the number of non-farm residents with farm jobs was only a third of the number employed on farms in August.

It can be expected that many farm residents who shift from farm employment to other jobs will eventually move away from farms completely. The interval during which they are not entirely dependent on non-farm employment, however, provides an adjustment period in which the choice of the most suitable non-farm occupation can be made. In the same manner, people who move into towns or cities but retain their farms and return to seed and harvest the crop each year, probably have more opportunity to find and adjust themselves to non-farm work than those who make the change from farm to non-farm work more abruptly.

In any reference to future trends in the farm labour force, however, it should be borne in mind that the large number of farm residents who have off-farm jobs represent a potential pool of farm labour which could revert back to agriculture if non-agricultural employment opportunities were to become less favourable.

Standards of Education in Farm Areas

In 1951, census statistics provided considerable detail showing the number of school years completed by the Canadian population resident in rural-farm,

¹ Special tabulations from D B S Labour Force Surveys.

² As against this four-month average, the twelve-month annual average from labour force surveys in 1958 was 712,000.

rural non-farm and urban areas. These data show conclusively that farm residents have lower standards of education, especially beyond the elementary or public school level, than people residing in rural non-farm and urban areas.

In 1951 only 29.6 per cent of the Canadian farm population (both sexes, of 14 years of age and over) had received nine years or more of schooling (Table 18).

Table 18—Rural-Farm, Rural Non-Farm and Urban Population 14 Years of Age and Over, with Nine Years or More of Schooling, Both Sexes, Canada, 1951

	Total Population 14 Years & Over	Number with Nine Years(a) Schooling or More	Per Cent of Total
Rural-farm	1,868,124	553,845	29.6
Rural non-farm	1,714,424	659,346	38.4
Urban	6,391,223	3,520,813	55.1
Total	9,973,771	4,734,004	47.5

SOURCE: Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. 1, Table 59.

(a) While census data was gathered on the number of years schooling rather than the grade completed, the formal education of persons with less than nine years of schooling is normally not above the elementary grades, while nine years or more represents the equivalent of high school and university training. The 1951 census did not count kindergarten as a year of schooling.

In rural non-farm areas, 38.4 per cent of the population aged 14 or more had received nine years or more of schooling, and in urban areas 55.1 per cent had the equivalent amount of schooling.

There was also considerable variation in rural school attendance in different provinces. These differences were greatest for age groups above 14, as in most provinces children aged 15 or more are past the age where they are subject to compulsory school attendance. ¹ In Quebec during the 1950-51 scholastic year, only 22.4 per cent of the rural population aged 15-19 attended school. In rural areas of Newfoundland 35.2 per cent in this age group attended school, in Ontario 40.3 per cent and in British Columbia 50.2 per cent. ²

¹ Although, in most of the provinces, children of 12 to 14 may be kept out of school for a period of up to six weeks in a school term if their help is needed on the farm.

² Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. X, page 222.

Turning to the agricultural labour force, in 1951 only 24 per cent of male farm workers aged 14 or over had received nine years or more of schooling.¹ Across the country the percentage with equivalent schooling varied from a low of 11 per cent in Quebec to a high of 38 per cent in British Columbia. Furthermore, the percentage of males with nine years or more of schooling was lower in the agricultural labour force than in all other industries except forestry, fishing and trapping. In the mining industry 39 per cent of the male labour force 14 years of age and over reported at least nine years of schooling in 1951. In construction the comparable percentage was 36, in manufacturing 46, in transportation 48, and in the service industries 65 per cent.

It is fairly clear therefore that much smaller proportions of the farm population and farm labour force have the equivalent of high school training than is the case among rural non-farm or urban people.

As far as vocational education in agriculture is concerned, only a relatively small number of students are attracted to this type of training.² One of the main obstacles to education in vocational agriculture is that it is practically impossible to demonstrate the immediate benefits derived. Other fields of technical training assist students to obtain employment, mainly as paid workers, and the immediate benefits of training are realized in increased earnings. With this incentive it is easier to attract the necessary number of students.

The lower standards of education achieved by people in the agricultural sector is an aspect of the declining position of agriculture in the economy. Since there is some correlation between education and income in our society, the difference in educational standards between farm and non-farm groups is one of the factors that contributes to a lack of equivalency between agricultural and non-agricultural incomes.³ In addition, the lower educational standards in the agricultural sector makes the transition of workers from farm to non-farm industries more difficult.

¹ *Census of Canada*, 1951, Vol. IV, Table 19.

² See Report No. 5 C, *Vocational Education in Agriculture, Vocational Training Programs in Canada*, Department of Labour, June 1959, p. 4.

³ The *Census of Canada*, 1951, Vol. X, p. 332, for example, showed that earnings of the heads of families increased significantly with the number of years schooling obtained.

6 – OTHER TRENDS IN THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

Size of Farms

Until fairly recent years, the number of farms in Canada increased between each decennial census, reaching a peak of nearly 733,000 farms in 1941. With the rapid decline in the farm labour force beginning in the 1940's, it is not surprising that the number of occupied farms began to decline as well. In 1951 the census reported 623,000 farms and in 1956, 575,000. Allowing for changes in census definitions, the decline in the total number of farms was slightly over 100,000 between 1941 and 1956.¹

But although the number of farms has fallen rapidly since 1941, the total area of occupied farm land has shown a small increase. This is a result of the tendency towards an increase in the size of farms. Between 1941 and 1956 the average size of farms in Canada has increased by nearly 28 per cent. Most of this increase, however, took place in the three Prairie provinces. In 1941, farms in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta averaged 291, 432, and 434 acres in size, respectively. In 1956 the average acreages, in the same order, were 364, 607 and 579.² During this period improved farm land in the Prairie provinces increased from 66 to 76 million acres.³ As the total acreage of improved farm land in Canada amounted to about 100 million acres in 1956, the 232,000 farms in the Prairie provinces, although representing only 40 per cent of all farms in Canada, accounted for three-quarters of the total improved land.

In all provinces except the Prairies and British Columbia, the acreage of improved land actually declined between 1941 and 1956.⁴ The decline in the three Maritime provinces, Quebec and Ontario, added together, totalled slightly over one and three-quarter million acres. Despite the decline in total acreage, however, amalgamation of farm holdings resulted in a decline in the number of smaller farms of one to 100 acres with a shift towards a higher percentage of larger farms, particularly those in the next size range of 101 to 200 acres. With this shift, the average size of farms increased between 1941 and 1956 in all of the five Eastern provinces. However, the expansion in size of farms was small compared with that of the Prairie region. In 1956 the average size of farms in the five Eastern provinces ranged from 113 acres in Prince Edward Island to 141 acres in Ontario.

In 1956, 156,000 farms or almost half the total number in Ontario, Quebec and the three Maritime provinces were still one to 100 acres in size. Although about two-thirds of these small farms were 51 to 100 acres in size, there is no doubt that a substantial amount of further farm consolidation would be beneficial to farmers. In these older provinces there is very little new agricultural land available so that an increase in size of farms can only be achieved by a

¹ Part of the decline in the number of farms was due to a change in the census definition of a farm in 1951. In 1941, holdings of one acre or more were included as farms if the agricultural production in the previous year was \$50 or more. In 1951 the lower limit was raised to three acres or more, or one acre or more with production valued at \$250 or more. On the basis of the 1951 definition it is estimated that the total number of farms in Canada in 1941 was 677,500.

² *Censuses of Canada*, 1951, Vol. X, p. 459, and 1956 Bulletin 2-11, Table 8.

³ Improved farm land is land in crops, summerfallow, improved pasture, new breaking and farm building sites.

⁴ These comparisons do not include Newfoundland which became a Canadian province only in 1949.

decrease in the number of farmers. If consolidation continues the farm labour force will probably show a further decline.

In the three Prairie provinces, although the number of farms up to 100 in size was negligible, there were still nearly 42,000 farms in the 101 - to 200 - acre class in 1956. Most of these would be 160 - acre, quarter-section farms. Of the 232,000 farms in the Prairie provinces, therefore, 18 per cent were in this small acreage class.

In British Columbia, the majority of farms are in the small size range. In 1956 over 60 per cent of the farms in this province were between one and 50 acres in size. Unlike changes occurring in other provinces, there has been an increase in small holdings of one to 10 acres in British Columbia since 1941. The addition of a few large ranches, however, has increased the overall average farm size from 153 to 183 acres between 1941 and 1956.

The size of farm is often the controlling factor in efficient farm organization. In areas where new farm land is no longer available the adjustment towards larger farms must proceed by a reduction in the number of farm operators and the eventual sale or rental of their land to the remaining operators. In the present period of relatively high land prices, farm rentals provide an alternative means of increasing the scale of operations. This alternative has been widely used in the three Prairie provinces and, to a more limited extent, in Ontario. In other provinces, however, most of the farms have been traditionally operated by their owners. In 1956 there were 126,000 rented or partly owned, partly rented farms in Canada, but 115,000 or 91 per cent of these were in the Prairie provinces and Ontario. ¹ In the three Maritime provinces and Quebec, 90 to 95 per cent of the farms were operated by the owners. Unless a marked change occurs in the traditional pattern of farm tenure in these provinces, the adjustment towards larger-sized farms will probably continue to be slower than that in other provinces. In this event, the farm labour force may also decline more slowly in the Eastern provinces.

Mechanization

The very high rate of mechanization in agriculture, particularly within the last two decades, has been the most evident of all changes taking place in the industry. The use of large-scale tillage, harvesting and other machinery has enabled farmers to increase the volume of production in spite of the decline in farm workers. The large increase in the number of farm tractors in Canada, from 160,000 in 1941 to 500,000 in 1956, illustrates the trend towards increased use of machines. In 1931 only 10 per cent of the farms reported the use of electric power. By 1956, 73 per cent were using electricity. Farmers are also using increasing numbers of automobiles, motor trucks, grain combines, milking machines, self-feeders and other implements. In 1956 farmers reported nearly 250,000 gasoline engines used in various ways: for sawing wood, grain loading, pumping water, etc.

¹ In Saskatchewan, 47 per cent of the 104,000 farms reporting to the census in 1956 were rented or partly owned, partly rented. The distribution of farms by area of improved land and by operator tenure showed that operators of rented or partly rented farms tended to farm larger acreages than those who operated owned land only. Fifty-one per cent of the rented and partly owned, partly rented farm units had improved land of 400 acres or more, whereas among owned farms only 27 per cent had 400 acres or more of improved land. See 1956 *Census of Canada*, Bulletin 2-8, Table 22.

In the twenty-year period from 1938 to 1957, farm implement and equipment sales in Canada totalled \$2.5 billion (wholesale values).¹ Sixty per cent of these sales were made in the three Prairie provinces, 24 per cent in Ontario, 10 per cent in Quebec and 6 per cent in the Atlantic provinces and British Columbia. These figures show that farms in the Prairie provinces and Ontario are generally more highly mechanized than in other provinces.

The extensive use of machinery, however, has been limited primarily to larger farms which have the potential to increase production. One of the dilemmas facing operators of small farms, is that it is not economically feasible to purchase labour-saving machinery. Of the 97,000 farms in Canada which were under 70 acres in size in 1956, only 37 per cent reported farm tractors. It was estimated that only 41 per cent of this same group of farms had an annual production potential of \$1,200 or more, so it is not surprising that the operators could not afford much machinery.²

The fact that 156,000 farms, or nearly half of the combined total of all farms in the two Central and three Maritime provinces were no more than 100 acres in size in 1956, suggests that many farmers in these areas cannot mechanize their farms without increasing the scale of operations. It would seem that the tendency towards increased scale can only continue in these areas through a further substantial reduction in the number of farms and consolidation into larger units. The consolidation of farms and use of more labour-saving machinery would imply a continued decline in the agricultural labour force.

Productivity

The decline in the farm labour force since the end of World War II, coinciding with an increase in agricultural production, suggests that the volume of agricultural output per man has increased significantly. For the five-year period 1953-57, index numbers of the physical volume of agricultural production in Canada averaged 145.5 per cent, based on average production in 1935-39=100.³ This increase in physical production occurred despite the fact that, between the 1935-39 and 1953-57 periods, the number of persons with jobs in agriculture declined by about 36 per cent.⁴

In the past few decades particularly, with the application of large-scale machinery and improved husbandry methods, productivity in agriculture has risen rapidly. In terms of constant 1935-39 dollars, the increase in average output per man-hour in agriculture between the two periods, 1926-30 and 1951-55, is estimated to have been close to 90 per cent (see Table G, Appendix B). It is possible, moreover, that further substantial improvements in agricultural output will be made if the present trend towards larger and more efficient farms continues. A continued decline in the number of small-scale farms would gradually diminish the amount of underemployment of labour on small farms, resulting in an increase in over-all productivity.

¹ Farm Implement and Equipment Sales, Industry and Merchandising Division, D B S.

² In the 1956 Agricultural Census, farms estimated to have a potential gross production of \$1200 or more from crops and livestock were classed as commercial farms. The income level of \$1200, although below desirable living standards, represents farm units which are above the subsistence stage.

³ Quarterly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics, DBS, April-June 1958,

⁴ This is the difference between Labour Force Survey estimates for June dates, averaged for the two above periods.

Income

According to estimates of income of farm operators, farm incomes in Canada began to rise rapidly (in current dollars) during the war years in the early 1940's. They continued to increase after the war, reaching a peak in 1951. In 1940 total net farm income, after deducting operating expenses and depreciation charges, was estimated at \$470 million. In 1951 it was four times this figure, at \$1.9 billion.¹ In 1952 farm income remained at almost the same level as in 1951, but in 1953 and subsequent years it has shown a fairly sharp decline. In 1958 net income was estimated at \$1.13 billion, about 68 per cent of the 1951 record.

The decline in farm income since the early 1950's, occurring at a time when incomes in other sectors have continued to rise, has been one of the factors which have contributed to the steadily shrinking importance of agriculture in the Canadian economy. The decline in agricultural income, however, must be considered in relation not only to changes in price levels, but also to the declining farm population and labour force. In terms of the smaller numbers in the agricultural labour force, incomes per capita in recent years have actually been slightly higher than they were during the period 1946 to 1951 (see Table H, Appendix B).

Real income per person in the agricultural labour force (in constant 1935-39 dollars) increased by about 7 per cent between the 1946-51 and 1952-57 periods.² On a regional basis, real income gains were greatest in the Maritime provinces, British Columbia and Quebec. In the three Prairie provinces, income was very little higher in the 1952-57 period. However, despite relatively larger increases in other regions, real income per person remained significantly higher in absolute terms in the Prairie provinces and in British Columbia. Over the entire 1946-57 period, the agricultural labour force in the Prairie region received 51 per cent of the total net farm income in Canada, while the farm labour force in this region accounted for only 40 per cent of the total.

Regardless of the fact that there were substantial differences in incomes in different regions, however, the above data indicate that real incomes per agricultural worker showed some increase in all regions in the 1952-57 period. It is not possible to estimate how much of this improvement was due to the decline of 22 per cent in farm labour force between the 1946-51 and 1952-57 periods, but it is most probable that average incomes would have been smaller if there had been no adjustment in the labour force, accompanied by a continued increase in productivity in agriculture.

It is beyond the scope of this study to compare agricultural incomes with those of non-agricultural pursuits. Such comparisons are difficult and involved. One of the main obstacles is that the farm income unit is typically an unpaid family unit, while incomes in other occupations accrue mainly from paid wages and salaries to individual persons. There is also the problem of determining the income that must be apportioned to the use of capital in farm and other enterprises. Income from supplementary occupations should also be taken into account.

¹ Net Income of Farm Operators also includes the value of inventory change and supplementary government payments. See *Handbook of Agricultural Statistics, Farm Income, 1926-57, Revised*, D B S, p.26.

² This was the difference in the average income from 1946-51 and the average from 1952-57.

These, and other factors such as skill and working hours must be evaluated in any attempt to compare agricultural and non-agricultural incomes.¹

There is sufficient historical evidence, however, that the movement out of agriculture is principally motivated by the more diversified opportunities and higher incomes in the non-farm sector of the economy. Referring again to census estimates, the fact that there were over 100,000 farms in Canada in 1956 with an annual gross production potential of less than \$1,200, is a fair indication that many farm families had relatively lower incomes in monetary terms than could be obtained in non-agricultural occupations.

¹ For a detailed discussion of farm and non-farm incomes see **The Comparison of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Incomes**, Canadian Agricultural Economics Society Workshop, Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, Canada, 1956.

7 - CONCLUSIONS

The Canadian agricultural labour force reached a peak in 1939 and then began to decline rapidly in the 1940's. Labour force surveys conducted since November 1945, show that the number of persons with jobs in agriculture declined from an average of 1,186,000 in 1946 to 692,000 in 1959. During this interval the decline has averaged 38,000 each year. The annual compound rate of change averaged 4.02 per cent. If the decline were to continue at the same compound rate, the number of persons with jobs in agriculture would drop to about 300,000 in the next twenty years, i.e. by 1979.

It seems unlikely, however, that the high rate of decline between 1946 and 1959 will continue. It must be remembered that the movement from the farms after 1940 was larger because people had been "dammed up" in agriculture during the depression in the 1930's. If one considers the trend of employment in agriculture for the past 28 years, i.e., from 1931 to 1959, the average compound rate of decline has been about 1.75 per cent.¹ Projecting this slower rate of decline into the future, would lead to the conclusion that the number employed in agriculture may be slightly less than 500,000 by 1979 or 1980.

Between 1946 and 1958, the decline in agricultural employment in Canada was greater, in relative terms, than the decline experienced in the United States. While farm employment in the United States declined by 30 per cent, it declined in Canada by 40 per cent.

Associated with this rapid decline there have been changes in the characteristics of farm labour. Perhaps the most significant of these is the diminishing supply of unpaid family help available to operators of farms. In 1946, unpaid family workers accounted for 30.4 per cent of the total persons with jobs on farms. By 1958, however, they accounted for only 20.7 per cent. The numbers of paid or hired workers have not increased to supplement the decline in unpaid labour, with the result that the farm labour force today consists primarily of farm operators. In 1958, 65.7 per cent of the total number of workers were self-employed operators. Of the 468,000² farm operators in 1958, on an average, only about half of them had an extra worker (paid or unpaid) to help on the farm.

In 1946 and 1947, females accounted for about 13 per cent of the total farm workers. By 1958 they represented only 7 per cent of the total. Census data show that there is also a lower proportion of females than of males in the total farm population aged 14 and over. In 1956 there were approximately 121 males to every 100 females in these age groups. However, the lack of balance in the number of males and females in rural areas has existed for a considerable number of years. In 1921, for example, males accounted for nearly 54 per cent of the total rural population. The higher rate of decline among female farm workers than among males is no doubt related to the increasing opportunities for women in non-agricultural industries, particularly in service, clerical and professional occupations.

¹ This is based on estimates of persons employed in agriculture at June dates over this period, see Table B, Appendix B.

² This was the annual average for the twelve labour force surveys. During the year the number varied from 430,000 to 506,000.

Another important factor in relation to the declining labour force in agriculture is the change in the age distribution of the workers. Many of those who left the farms for jobs in other industries were in the younger age groups, with the result that there is a higher proportion of older workers remaining on farms today. According to labour force surveys in 1958, men in the 25-44 age group represented 50 per cent of all men in the non-agricultural labour force, but in agriculture this age group included only 37 per cent of the men. In the agricultural labour force, over 42 per cent of all males were 45 years old or over.

In the three Maritime provinces, in 1951, nearly half of the farm operators were 50 years old or over. In Ontario, about 46 per cent of the operators were 50 years old or more. In the three Prairie provinces and Quebec, however, only 37 per cent of the operators were in this senior age group. These data suggest that changes in the farm labour force will vary somewhat in different regions in the future. Those regions where a high proportion of farm operators are due for retirement may experience a more rapid decline in farm population and farm labour than regions with younger operators.

Accompanying the greater mechanization on farms and the need for less farm labour there have been changes in the pattern of seasonal employment in agriculture. It might be supposed that with a considerably smaller labour force in agriculture in recent years, a higher percentage of those remaining on farms would be employed the year-round. The trend, however, has actually been in the opposite direction. The percentage of seasonal workers compared with the total in the farm labour force has been steadily increasing. Increased seasonality may be due to a number of different factors but it is probable that the chief influence is the increase in farm mechanization. With the use of large-scale machinery farmers tend to speed up their seeding and harvesting operations, concentrating the employment of seasonal labour over much shorter periods of time and doing without extra year-round help after the peak period of activity is over. During a large part of the year many farmers who are well equipped with machinery are able to get along almost single-handed.

To a considerable extent, however, the high degree of seasonality associated with the dependence on weather in agriculture is still offset by the flexibility of the family nature of the farm labour force. Separate classifications of agricultural workers by sex and age reveal that approximately 40 per cent of the seasonal workers (during the years 1953 to 1958 inclusive) were boys in the 14 - to 19 - year age group and unpaid females, most of whom would have been members of farm families. Workers in these categories are available for farm work when needed but many of them leave the labour force entirely, either to attend school or to carry on housekeeping activities, after peak seasons of farm work are completed. Moreover, a number of the older operators and other men working on farms do not seek, or are not able to find, employment elsewhere after peak farm seasons are over. Workers such as these are available again for the next round of farm activities. In other words, the family farm has a sort of "built-in" flexibility that enables it to cope fairly well with recurring seasonal work requirements. This situation may alter considerably in the future, however, if unpaid family labour on farms continues to decline as rapidly as it has in recent years. If less help is obtained from family members, farmers will probably have to engage a higher proportion of hired labour which may not be as readily available and which will require more careful recruitment.

Because of the traditional reliance on family labour, farmers have not given sufficient thought — at least in a formal manner — to the considerable improve-

ments in working conditions that have been gained by employees in other industries. As a result legislative regulations that would guarantee agricultural employees employment conditions commensurate with those in other industries are practically non-existent. Of the large number of labour standards with respect to minimum wages, maximum hours of work, holidays, child labour, etc., the only regulation applicable to agriculture thus far is workmen's compensation. In all provinces except Quebec, agricultural workers may be eligible for workmen's compensation upon the application of farm employers. So far, however, the extent of coverage granted to farm workers has been very small.

The hours of work are still considerably longer in agriculture than in other industries. In 1958 farm workers put in an average of 54 hours per week, compared with 40 hours for workers in non-agricultural industries.

Wages for hired farm workers have been rising since the early 1940's. In August 1941, the average in Canada for male farm wages, with board, was \$35.00 per month. In August 1958, the comparable average was \$120.00. Despite this increase over the years, however, farm wages remain lower even than those for unskilled labour in other industries and farm operators who need extra help find it difficult to compete in the general labour market. Since unemployment insurance has not yet been extended to agricultural workers it is becoming even more difficult to attract the required amount of labour to meet seasonal demands in farm work.

There is no doubt that a large number of different factors have been influential in bringing about the decline in the farm labour force since the 1940's. Improved agricultural machinery and farming technology have made it possible for a drastically reduced labour force to produce a surplus of some farm products despite the fact that the Canadian population rose from 11.5 to 16.1 million between 1941 and 1956.

With the increase in farm mechanization, early land settlement policies which used the 100-acre unit for Ontario farms and the 160-acre unit in the Prairie provinces have proven to be inadequate. These policies have resulted in an inflexible tenure of many small, low-income farms that do not provide a suitable standard of living for families residing on them. In five provinces including Ontario, Quebec and the three Maritime provinces, almost one-half of the total number of farms were not larger than 100 acres in 1956. In the Prairie provinces 23 per cent of the farms were no larger than 200 acres, and in British Columbia over 60 per cent of the farms were no larger than 50 acres in size. The small physical size of farms is only one of a number of different obstacles that hinder many farm families in producing a reasonable standard of living, but there is little doubt that it is the limiting factor in many cases.

Inadequate incomes on small farms have produced a shift of people out of agriculture since the 1940's and, in view of the large number of small-scale enterprises still remaining in the industry, it is quite possible that the same process will continue for some time in the future. Developments of the past few years, such as the increase in the number of farms operating under different forms of production contracts, indicate that farmers are willing to make use of opportunities to increase their scale of operations. New legislation that will enable the Canadian Farm Credit Corporation (formerly the Farm Loan Board) to provide up to \$27,500 to an individual farmer for the purchase of land, and other increased credit facilities, should enable some farmers to expand the size of their enterprises. All of these developments, together with continued

adaptation of machines and science to agricultural practices, will result in increased productivity, which in turn implies diminishing requirements for manpower.

On a regional basis, it seems probable that in the future the decline in the agricultural labour force may occur at a relatively faster rate in the Prairie provinces than in other regions. Although the average rate of decline has so far proceeded more slowly in the Prairies than in most regions, several factors support the above conclusion:

In 1958, the agricultural labour force in the Prairie region was still 29 per cent of the total Prairie labour force, whereas it represented only 10 per cent or less of the total labour force in the two central provinces and British Columbia. In the latter three industrialized provinces, the close proximity of large urban markets for farm products should ultimately reduce the rate of decline as the agricultural labour force reaches a minimum level necessary to meet domestic food demands. In the Prairie region, however, the post-war expansion in new non-agricultural industries, such as oil, natural gas and increased manufacturing, has provided this area with high-wage secondary industries which should continue to attract surplus labour away from the farms. Although the farms in the Prairie provinces are generally larger, and have provided higher incomes than farms in other provinces in the past, in the northern park belt of the Prairies it is recognized that many farms are too small to provide suitable standards of income. Amalgamation of farms in these areas will probably result in a further decline in the agricultural labour force.

In the three Maritime provinces, although the agricultural labour force still constituted 13 per cent of the total labour force in 1958, the alternatives in non-agricultural pursuits will probably continue to be more limited than in other regions and the transition from agriculture to non-agriculture may be slower on this account.

It does not lie within the scope of this present work to attempt complex long-range predictions of the future trend in the agricultural labour force, but it seems fairly conservative to conclude that there will be a continuing decline for some years ahead. It would be unrealistic to suggest that the number of farm workers in Canada may continue to decline by 38,000 each year (the average annual decline between 1946 and 1959), because at this rate the farm labour force would drop to zero in less than 20 years. However, it is quite possible that further substantial declines will occur from the level of 692,000 workers in primary agriculture in 1959.

APPENDIX A

Note on the Comparability of 1951 Census and Labour Force Survey Data Concerning the Labour Force in Agriculture

The 1951 Census of Canada, Vol. IV, estimated the labour force in agriculture in Canada at approximately 830,000. A Labour Force Survey conducted during the same week, i.e., the week ending June 2, 1951, estimated the agricultural labour force at about 990,000. The difference in the two estimates was therefore about 160,000. Such a wide difference deserves some explanation.

Analysis of the two sources of data by regions, sex, class of worker and age distribution (see Table below) reveals that the census and labour force survey data differed most widely in the following respects:

- (1) On a regional basis, differences were confined to the Quebec, Ontario and Prairie regions. In these three regions the labour force survey showed much larger numbers in the agricultural labour force than the census.
- (2) The labour force survey showed a higher number of both males and females than the census, i.e., nearly 100,000 more males and over 60,000 more females.
- (3) Analysis by type of worker shows that differences were greatest in the unpaid family worker class. The labour force survey estimates for unpaid males and females were 61,000 and 62,000, respectively, above the census estimates.
- (4) By age distribution, differences between the two estimates were not confined to any particular group but on a percentage basis the differences were greatest for the younger age groups, especially the 14 to 19 group.

In this study of the trends in the agricultural labour force, the labour force survey data were used, not only because they provided an unbroken series from 1946 on, but because there is good reason to believe that the census estimate was too low. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics acknowledges the fact that the labour force survey was able to probe more deeply into certain characteristics and therefore reported more unpaid family workers on farms and in businesses than the census (see Census of 1951, Vol. IV, page XV). As shown above, the labour force survey reported about 120,000 more unpaid farm family workers than the census, which accounted for a major part of the difference between the two estimates.

**Comparison of Census and Labour Force Survey Data on the Canadian
Agricultural Labour Force, June 1951**

(1) Comparison by Region and Sex in Thousands

Data From		Atlantic				Prairie	British
		Canada	Region	Quebec	Ontario	Region	Columbia
Labour Force Survey	Male	893	63	228	220	359	23
	Female	99	4	20	32	37	6
	Total	992	67	248	252	396	29
Census	Male	794	62	188	193	324	27
	Female	33	1	7	10	13	2
	Total	827	63	195	203	337	29

(2) Comparison by type of Worker and Sex in Thousands

		Total	Self-employed	Unpaid	Paid
Labour Force Survey	Male	892	603	187	102
	Female	99	10	80	9
	Total	991	613	267	111
Census	Male	798	540	126	132
	Female	33	9	18	6
	Total	831	549	144	138

(3) Comparison by Age and Sex in Thousands

		Total	14-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Labour Force Survey	Male	892	112	94	353	262	71
	Female	99	15	13	43	25	3
	Total	991	127	107	396	287	74
Census	Male	798	88	82	313	248	67
	Female	33	5	4	12	10	2
	Total	831	93	86	325	258	69

SOURCES: DBS Labour Force Survey, June 2, 1951; and Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. IV, Tables 2 and 11.

NOTE: Labour Force Survey data for Canada and Atlantic region include, but Census data exclude, Newfoundland. However, the total agricultural labour force in Newfoundland was only 4,000 in June 1951.

APPENDIX B

Table A — Persons 14 Years of Age and Over With Jobs in the Labour Force, by Industry, Both Sexes, Canada, 1948 and 1958

(Annual averages in thousands)

Industry	1948	1958 ^(a)	Percentage Distribution	
	No.	No.	1948 %	1958 ^(a) %
Manufacturing.....	1,272	1,469	26.0	25.7
Service.....	832	1,259	17.0	22.0
Trade.....	650	915	13.3	16.0
Agriculture	1,096	712	22.4	12.4
Transportation (b).....	373	432	7.6	7.5
Construction.....	289	433	5.9	7.6
Finance and Insurance (c).....	139	211	2.9	3.7
Mining and Quarrying (d).....	75	109	1.6	1.9
Forestry.....	97	86	2.0	1.5
Public Utilities	41	78	0.8	1.4
Fishing and Trapping	22	18	0.5	0.3
Total non-agricultural.....	3,790	5,010	77.6	87.6
Total all industries.....	4,886	5,722	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Special tabulations from DBS Labour Force Surveys, Ottawa.

(a) Data for 1958 include Newfoundland.

(b) Includes storage and communication.

(c) Includes real estate.

(d) Includes oil wells.

Table B — Estimates of the Canadian Civilian Labour Force, Total all Industries and Agriculture, by Sex, at June 1 dates, ^(a) 1931-58 ^(b)

Year	Total all Industries			Agriculture			Agriculture as Per Cent of all Industries %
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
	(thousands of persons with Jobs)						
1931.....	2,931	739	3,670	1,087	129	1,216	33.1
1932.....	2,747	723	3,470	1,100	137	1,237	35.6
1933.....	2,721	728	3,449	1,113	144	1,257	36.4
1934.....	2,932	775	3,707	1,126	151	1,277	34.4
1935.....	2,982	795	3,777	1,139	159	1,298	34.4
1936.....	3,073	822	3,895	1,153	166	1,319	33.9
1937.....	3,254	861	4,115	1,166	173	1,339	32.5
1938.....	3,209	857	4,066	1,179	180	1,359	33.4
1939.....	3,247	873	4,120	1,192	187	1,379	33.5
1940.....	3,273	911	4,184	1,166	178	1,344	32.1
1941.....	3,313	958	4,271	1,066	158	1,224	28.6
1942.....	3,364	1,070	4,434	943	196	1,139	25.7
1943.....	3,136	1,355	4,491	947	171	1,118	24.9
1944.....	3,098	1,387	4,485	948	188	1,136	25.3
1945.....	3,053	1,394	4,447	943	201	1,144	25.7
1946.....	3,649	1,089	4,738	1,071	200	1,271	26.8
1947.....	3,793	1,069	4,862	1,001	171	1,172	24.1
1948.....	3,880	1,074	4,954	1,026	160	1,186	23.9
1949.....	3,892	1,099	4,991	982	132	1,114	22.3
1950.....	3,944	1,112	5,056	973	93	1,066	21.1
1951.....	3,993	1,162	5,155	892	99	991	19.2
1952.....	4,059	1,180	5,239	841	86	927	17.7
1953.....	4,097	1,174	5,271	848	50	898	17.0
1954.....	4,074	1,181	5,255	858	35	893	17.0
1955.....	4,144	1,227	5,371	837	36	873	16.3
1956.....	4,271	1,301	5,572	777	42	819	14.7
1957.....	4,376	1,398	5,774	733	39	772	13.4
1958.....	4,316	1,434	5,750	683	56	739	12.9
1959.....	4,361	1,491	5,852	677	47	724	12.4

SOURCES: DBS Reference Paper No. 23, revised; DBS Reference Paper No. 58, 1958 revision; and DBS Labour Force Surveys.

(a) All data are for survey dates nearest June 1.

(b) Newfoundland included from 1950.

Table C — Annual Percentage Changes in the Agricultural Labour Force, Persons with Jobs, Both Sexes, Canada and Regions, 1946-58

Years	Canada (a) %	Atlantic Region %	Quebec %	Ontario %	Prairie Region %	British Columbia %
1946-47	-5.46	- 7.03	- 8.89	- 6.18	-3.54	+ 8.94
1947-48	-2.27	- 5.23	- 2.67	- 3.42	-1.34	+ 5.97
1948-49	-1.57	- 0.31	- 1.63	- 1.73	-2.54	+ 3.52
1949-50	-5.61	-11.38	+ 5.27	-10.90	-6.71	-21.77
1950-51	-7.78	-19.10	- 9.92	- 6.21	-5.27	- 2.61
1951-52	-5.14	- 5.58	- 8.94	- 4.31	-1.90	-24.11
1952-53	-3.54	+ 0.45	- 2.88	- 3.19	-4.20	- 3.53
1953-54	+2.21	-11.90	+ 5.51	+14.68	-5.87	+13.36
1954-55	-6.79	- 5.47	-19.48	- 6.47	-2.22	+31.78
1955-56	-5.21	- 0.18	- 4.36	- 9.67	-2.27	-16.80
1956-57	-4.05	+13.59	+ 3.59	-10.12	-5.44	-10.10
1957-58	-4.34	+ 3.99	- 5.81	- 8.78	-3.00	+ 6.16
(average annual compound rate)						
1946-58	-4.13	- 4.01	- 4.18	- 4.69	-3.69	- 0.77

SOURCE: DBS Labour Force Surveys.

(a) Data for Newfoundland included with Canadian total from 1949.

NOTE: Due to larger sampling errors in labour force surveys for areas with smaller estimates, such as the Atlantic Provinces and British Columbia, the rates of decline or increase in these areas should only be considered as rough indicators.

**Table D — Post-War Immigration to Canada Showing Those Who Stated Their
Intended Occupation as Farming, Both Sexes, 1946-58**

Year	Total Immigrants	Destined to Labour Force	Intended to Farm Labour Force	Per Cent Intending to Farm (a)
1946	71,719	14,375	1,120	7.8
1947	64,127	39,771	4,550	11.4
1948	125,414	75,204	19,799	26.3
1949	95,217	52,934	19,139	36.2
1950	73,912	40,123	15,520	38.7
1951	194,391	113,386	25,890	22.8
1952	164,498	84,862	16,971	20.0
1953	168,868	91,133	17,250	18.9
1954	154,227	84,376	10,920	12.9
1955	109,946	57,987	7,036	12.1
1956	164,857	91,039	7,500	8.2
1957	282,164	151,511	10,838	7.2
1958	124,851	63,078	5,071	8.0
Total	1,794,191	959,779	161,604	16.8

SOURCES: Immigration Bulletins, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa, and information from Statistics Section, Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

(a) Of all immigrants destined to the labour force.

Table E — Seasonal Indexes for Persons With Jobs in Agriculture, Both Sexes,
Canada, Quebec, Ontario and Prairie Provinces, 1953-58

Month	Canada						Quebec						
	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	Month	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
January	88.6	88.5	88.3	88.2	88.2	88.2	January	87.3	87.3	87.5	87.5	87.3	87.1
February	87.5	87.1	86.6	86.2	85.9	85.6	February	92.1	92.3	92.5	92.0	91.3	90.5
March	90.5	90.1	89.5	88.8	88.0	87.7	March	96.6	96.8	97.0	97.0	96.8	96.6
April	96.3	96.3	96.1	95.9	95.9	96.0	April	100.4	100.6	100.8	100.8	100.6	100.3
May	103.9	104.4	104.7	104.5	104.2	104.2	May	104.4	104.8	105.4	105.8	105.8	105.5
June	104.6	104.5	104.3	104.1	104.0	104.1	June	103.6	103.9	104.2	104.6	105.0	104.9
July	118.3	118.2	117.9	117.7	117.8	117.8	July	121.7	121.6	120.2	118.4	117.9	117.9
August	116.7	117.4	119.1	121.0	121.6	122.0	August	112.1	112.7	113.8	115.4	117.2	119.0
September	106.6	106.7	107.4	108.2	108.6	108.7	September	100.6	100.9	101.5	102.6	103.7	103.6
October	101.4	101.2	101.0	100.8	100.8	100.9	October	99.1	97.9	97.5	97.4	97.5	98.2
November	94.5	94.5	94.3	94.1	94.1	94.2	November	92.5	91.9	90.7	89.8	89.0	88.6
December	91.1	91.0	90.8	90.7	90.7	90.7	December	89.6	89.4	88.6	88.4	88.1	87.9

Ontario

Prairie Provinces

January	91.3	91.3	91.5	92.0	92.5	92.7	January	87.9	87.2	86.4	86.1	86.3	86.4
February	87.8	87.8	87.5	87.0	86.5	86.2	February	83.8	83.8	83.7	83.9	84.7	84.9
March	89.1	89.0	88.7	87.8	87.5	87.5	March	87.3	86.6	85.9	85.2	85.3	85.3
April	95.0	95.0	94.9	94.9	94.0	94.0	April	95.7	95.7	95.5	95.5	95.8	95.9
May	98.8	98.8	98.8	98.9	99.0	99.0	May	107.1	107.3	107.1	107.1	107.5	107.6
June	104.0	104.2	104.3	104.6	104.6	104.9	June	107.6	107.6	107.3	106.4	104.8	104.8
July	116.6	116.5	116.5	116.6	116.8	116.8	July	115.8	116.1	116.9	116.9	116.8	116.5
August	120.8	121.1	121.8	122.6	123.2	123.4	August	114.9	115.7	118.8	122.5	122.1	121.6
September	106.8	106.6	106.1	105.6	105.1	105.0	September	110.0	110.8	111.7	112.0	112.3	112.4
October	97.7	97.9	97.9	98.0	98.2	98.3	October	106.1	106.0	105.4	104.4	104.1	103.9
November	96.3	96.2	96.2	96.3	96.4	96.3	November	93.9	93.7	91.7	91.4	91.6	91.8
December	95.8	95.8	95.8	95.9	96.0	96.0	December	89.6	89.5	89.3	88.6	88.8	88.8

SOURCE: DBS Labour Force Surveys. Seasonal indexes calculated by ratio-to-moving average method using three term moving average and free hand chart curves to smooth irregular deviations.

Table F — Percentage Distribution of Males With Jobs in Agriculture, by Hours Worked per Week, Averages for Four Quarters, (a) Canada, 1946-58

Year	Percentage of Total Working				Total
	0-34 hours	35-44 hours	45-54 hours	55+ hours	
1946	7.3	5.8	16.8	70.1	100.0
1947	8.6	9.6	19.6	62.2	100.0
1948	9.3	9.8	19.3	61.6	100.0
1949	9.5	10.5	20.3	59.7	100.0
1950	10.5	11.7	24.2	53.6	100.0
1951	10.0	10.3	22.7	57.0	100.0
1952	8.8	10.0	24.3	56.9	100.0
1953	5.9	13.4	28.7	52.0	100.0
1954	4.7	14.6	25.0	55.7	100.0
1955	4.9	15.4	24.5	55.2	100.0
1956	4.8	14.8	22.3	58.1	100.0
1957	5.8	13.7	22.3	58.2	100.0
1958	7.0	13.6	21.1	58.3	100.0

SOURCES: DBS Reference Paper No. 58, 1958 revision, and DBS monthly Labour Force Surveys.

(a) Averages for February, May, August and November, except for the years 1946-52. In these years the labour force surveys were conducted on a quarterly basis only, and in a few cases surveys were not conducted during the same months of each year.

Table G — Indexes of Agricultural Labour Productivity, Canada, 1946-55**(1935-39 average = 100)**

	Gross Domestic Product ^(a) per man-hour	Gross Physical Product per man-hour
Average 1926-30	110	N.A.
Average 1935-39	100	100
1946	129	142
1947	121	145
1948	142	158
1949	142	161
1950	147	194
1951	202	242
1952	222	259
1953	218	248
1954	169	181
1955	220	248
Average 1951-55	206	236

SOURCE: W.M. Drummond and W. Mackenzie, **Progress and Prospects of Canadian Agriculture**, Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, Queen's Printer, Ottawa, 1957, p. 90.

(a) The Gross Domestic Product is the total value of the output of all products and services minus the cost of materials.

Table H — Twelve-Year Comparison of Agricultural Labour Force and Net Farm Real Income per Person in the Labour Force, Canada and Regions, 1946-57

	Canada ^(a)	Atlantic Region	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Region	British Columbia
(agricultural labour force in thousands)						
Average from 1946-51	1,071	79	251	281	427	33
Average from 1952-57	831	51	190	225	340	25
Percentage change from 1st to 2nd half of period	-22	-35	-24	-20	-20	-24
(average net farm real income ^(b) per person, in 1935-39 dollars)						
1946-51	836	483	502	816	1,092	1,081
1952-57	898	579	576	882	1,106	1,268
Percentage change from 1st to 2nd half of period	+ 7	+20	+15	+ 8	+ 1	+17
(percentage distribution during entire period 1946-57 of:)						
Agricultural labour force	100.0	6.8	23.2	26.7	40.3	3.0
Net farm real income	100.0	4.1	14.4	26.1	51.3	4.1

SOURCES: DBS Labour Force Surveys and Farm Income Statistics, Agricultural Division, DBS.

(a) Does not include Newfoundland.

(b) Net farm real income was calculated in several steps:

- (1) The cost of hired labour was added to DBS net farm income in order to compare farm income with the total agricultural labour force.
- (2) From net income in (1), the food component of farm income in kind was subtracted and deflated by index numbers of prices received for farm products, 1935-39=100.
- (3) The remainder of net income from (2) was deflated by index numbers of farm family living costs, 1935-39=100.
- (4) Deflated net income in kind was then added back to deflated net income from (3) to provide net farm real income in 1935-39 dollars.
- (5) Net farm real income was divided by the labour force to provide real income per person.

INDEX

- Age distribution:
 farm operators, 19-21, 56
 other farm workers, 21-24, 56
 non-agricultural labour force, 22-24, 56
- Agricultural labour force:
 Canada and regions, 3-13, 55, 58, 62-63
 United States, 12, 55
 absolute and relative decline, 1, 3-13, 55, 58, 61-63
 changes during World War II, 5
- Comparability of census and labour force surveys, 59-60
- Education, 46-48
- Family size, 44-45
- Farms:
 number and size, 49-51, 57-58
 owned and rented, 50
 commercial and non-commercial, 51, 53
- Farm Labour Program, 35-36
- Farm operators, 19-21, 25, 55
- Hours of work, 32-34, 39, 57, 66
- Imbalance of sexes, 16-17, 55
- Immigrant labour, 13-14, 64
- Industrial Distribution of Labour Force, 3, 61
- Income, 52-53, 68
- Labour force surveys, 2, 7
- Labour standards, 37-38, 57
- Machinery and mechanization, 50-51
- Marital status, 23, 25
- Mobility of young people, 23
- National Employment Service, 13, 35-36
- Non-agricultural labour force, 3, 6, 10, 61-62 (see also under Age, 22-24)
- Off-farm jobs, 45-46
- Organized movements (see Farm Labour Program).
- Participation in the labour force, 17-19 (see also Seasonal, 32)
- Part-time workers, 34
- Population, farm and non-farm, 3, 17, 43-44, 57
- Productivity, 51, 57, 67
- Residents and non-residents of farms, 18-19, 45-46
- Seasonal variation:
 in employment, 29-35, 56
 amplitude, 31
 indexes, 31, 65
 in unemployment, 31, 34
 in relation to hours worked, 32, 34
- Seasonal worker placements (see Farm Labour Program).
- Status of workers:
 self-employed, 3, 25-28, 55
 paid, 25-28
 unpaid, 25-28
- Unemployment insurance, 37, 39, 42
- Wages:
 farm, 39-42
 forestry, 42
 other unskilled labour, 40-41
- Women in the farm labour force, 15-19, 22-24, 27, 55, 62 (see also Seasonal, 31-32)
- Working conditions, 37-39, 42, 56-57

